



KILGORE LAW

PLLC

P.O. BOX 623
TURNER, ME 04282
PHONE: (207) 805-7760
FAX: (207) 805-7760
INFO@TKILGOREESQ.COM

Written Testimony of Taylor Kilgore, Esq.

In Support of LD 2212, HP1491, “An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027”

Before the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs (AFA)

February 27, 2026

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

My name is Taylor Kilgore, and I submit this testimony in strong support of LD 2212, HP1491, “An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027.” In I urge the committee to pass the 2026-27 Recommended General Fund Supplemental Budget, in particular to fully fund MCPDS as elucidated in the 2026-27 Recommended General Fund Supplemental Budget – Language, Sections T-18 & T-19, appearing on page 47. I submit this testimony only on my own behalf, and not on behalf of any other organizations or entities that I am a part of.

My firm, Kilgore Law PLLC, is a small rural firm that focuses exclusively on Child Protective cases. Over the past two years, we intentionally shifted away from other practice areas to help address the shortage of parent counsel and Guardians ad Litem. As a result, a large portion of our caseload now consists of MCPDS appointments. I commend the committee for taking up this bill to address hopefully prevent the impending MCPDS budget shortfall. I hope this letter helps illustrate how deeply this situation will affect contracted counsel—many of whom are also your constituents—and how it threatens to worsen Maine’s already critical shortage of child protection attorneys.

For many small businesses, like solo or small shop law firms, the deferment of expected cash flows for services provided and related reimbursement of expenses for three months would be devastating. If MCPDS is unable to make timely payments between April and June 2026, I and many others will have no choice but to draw on lines of credit to meet payroll and operational costs. Kilgore

Law, PLLC has always fulfilled its financial obligations without borrowing, but this situation likely leaves no viable alternative. The interest rate on my particular credit line is approximately 8.5%. In effect, the State would be forcing me to provide it a three-month loan—at my own expense. That is not a sustainable or fair expectation for small businesses that uphold the State’s constitutional obligations to indigent clients, that the State has already been sued for not providing.

This uncertainty also undermines my ability to plan for the future. I have been recruiting additional attorneys to expand our capacity and help alleviate the counsel shortage. I had also planned to host a Maine Law intern during summer 2026. If payments are suspended for three months, both efforts will have to be halted until the financial horizon is clearer. It would be fiscally irresponsible to hire or mentor new attorneys in the face of such instability, and only the Legislature can provide that clarity by fully funding MCPDS for this year and the next.

More concerningly, I may be forced to reevaluate whether it is financially sustainable for my firm to continue devoting our practice exclusively to child protective representation. I want to continue this work because I believe deeply in the constitutional right to counsel and in serving Maine’s most vulnerable families. However, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain that commitment when the State cannot guarantee payment for services already rendered.

The ripple effects extend beyond my firm, and the consequences of this budget gap will be felt well beyond the legal community. Like many small practices, we rely on other small Maine businesses—our bookkeeper, office cleaner, accountant, and payroll service among them. When our income is disrupted, so is theirs, and they are also many of your constituents.

While LD 2212 does not in and of itself alleviate the potential for delayed payments, it approves the funding, and sets up LD 2059, “An Act to Provide Required Funding for the Reimbursement of Assigned Counsel and to Develop the Public Defender Office for Cumberland County.” I understand that LD 2059 would immediately release the funds so they could be used to avoid the delay I have repeatedly referred to. However, without the passage of LD 2212, there are no funds and no hope for a responsible fiscal solution from one of my firm’s greatest debtors.

In conclusion, I urge the Legislature to take immediate action to ensure that MCPDS is funded at a level sufficient to meet its obligations. Attorneys cannot shoulder the financial burden of systemic underfunding while the constitutional rights of Maine citizens hang in the balance. LD 2212, HP1491, “An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the

Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027” is a necessary first step in addressing this oncoming fiscal train for the attorneys and struggling, vulnerable families of Maine, and maintaining Maine’s ability to meet it’s Federal & State Constitutional obligations.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Kilgore', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Taylor S. Kilgore, Esq.

Guardian Ad Litem & Parent Attorney

Owner/Lead Attorney, Kilgore Law PLLC