



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Representative Margaret Craven introducing*  
**LD 113, An Act To Provide Funding for Guardians Ad Litem**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Margaret Craven, and I represent House District 93, which is part of Lewiston. I am here today to introduce **LD 113 An Act To Provide Funding for Guardians Ad Litem**.

For those unfamiliar, a Guardian ad Litem, or GAL, is a person appointed by a Maine court to gather information and make recommendations concerning children involved in certain family matters and child protection cases. LD 113 is concerned with GALs involved in family matters, which can include matters of divorce, parental rights, grandparent visitation and guardianship cases.

Guardian ad litem services are paid by one or both litigants in family matters. To determine which party pays or how to divide the cost between the two, the court reviews income, assets, property and other relevant factors.

The bill before you would provide ongoing funding for guardian ad litem services in family matters and, specifically, would cover the costs of GAL services when litigants cannot afford those services themselves.

As you will hear in testimony later today from the Family Law Advisory Commission, there is public funding for GALs in other Maine court proceedings when litigants cannot afford one. LD 113 is not unprecedented, and it would make GAL services in family matters more equitable and efficient.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have, but there are experts here today who may be better suited to speak to the details of the GAL program. Thank you for your time and attention.