

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am Justin Whynot, a father and grandfather from Windham, lifelong resident of Maine, and Co-Director of Parents Rights Maine. I am here in opposition of LD 1735.

This bill would not only put Maine's children at risk, it would potentially affect minors all over the United States. This legislation would turn Maine into a sanctuary state for transitioning minors, bypassing laws in their parents' home states. LD1735 would allow Maine children to be taken from their homes if parents refuse elective surgeries, pharmaceuticals, or other procedures for their children. These procedures are known to have lasting detrimental effects on an individual's physical, emotional and mental health.

LD1735 would also place "handcuffs" on Maine law enforcement agencies when assisting with minors who run away from their homes. Law enforcement efforts could be halted when a non-custodial parent takes a minor from their home. Maine's Judicial system works diligently to ensure minors are in a healthy environment, but this bill would undermine those efforts by removing the enforcement side of Maine's custodial laws. The state of Maine could ultimately be making minors wards of the state.

In the state of Maine a minor needs a work permit to get a job. You must be 16 to get a driver's license. You must be 18 to vote. You need parental permission to get a tattoo or piercing until you're 18. You have to be 21 to buy tobacco or alcohol products. LD1735 would go against all precedents set in ensuring the well-being of minors and the rights of Maine's parents.

Removing children from their family, especially when they're in a vulnerable and confused state, would have lasting, harmful, psychological affects to the children of Maine. Maine's children are already burdened by complex emotional issues. Please don't add to the severity of this problem by allowing the state to remove children from their homes for being refused irreversible surgeries and treatments. Or by tying the hands of Maine's dedicated law-enforcement agencies which play a vital part in protecting the physical, emotional and mental health of Maine's children.

That's why I'm here today to ask you to vote to not pass LD1735. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Justin Whynot  
Windham