

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 537

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT THE DOXING OF A MINOR AND
TO AUTHORIZE A RELATED CIVIL ACTION

OFFICERS

March 3, 2025

PRESIDENT

Faye Anderson
RSU 22

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Steven Bailey, the executive director of the Maine School Boards Association, speaking on behalf of the MSBA legislative committee in support of L.D. 537, *An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action*. Our organization represents more than 1,700 school boards members across the state.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Joseph Long
MSAD 35/RSU 35

One of our most important duties as school boards members is protecting our students. Our association has passed multiple resolutions in support of school safety. Our MSMA Model Policy *JICK: Bullying*, based on state and federal law, reflects this. At the very top, it reads:

VICE PRESIDENT

Roy Gott
RSU 24

The Board believes that bullying, including cyberbullying, is detrimental to student well-being and to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Jane Osborne
Deer Isle-Stonington CSD

School policies strictly prohibit cyberbullying of all kinds and carry strict consequences.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Steven W. Bailey

Yet our schools are limited in how they can protect students outside of school. Doxing of a minor by an adult is unfortunately one of those situations. We have seen circumstances where a student has faced unwanted exposure or attention, due to no fault of their own, because of the actions of an adult. This has led to online vitriol and attacks – something no child should be subjected to.

MAINE COUNCIL OF
SCHOOL BOARD
ATTORNEYS

Isabel Ekman, Esq., Chair

Just imagine – would you be able to learn if you were facing these attacks? Could you even go to school? Would you even feel safe going to school, knowing it had to increase its security procedures? Maine school board members believe in doing what we can to ensure the physical and emotional safety of all our students, and we believe L.D. 537 would help to deter these doxing situations against minors and protect our children.

Our members' expertise is on schools and students, not the judicial system. Our testimony is primarily based on MSBA's support for protecting students from these attacks and not getting into the details of this particular legal approach to tackling the challenge.

In addition, one board member also noted that we have many students who are over the age of 18 who may not be protected by this bill. We encourage lawmakers to add language that would protect these students, as well.

Again, MSBA supports L.D. 537 and believes that we must protect our students from online bullying and harassment. Thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.