

*132nd Legislature*  
***Senate of***  
***Maine***  
*Senate District 29*

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*Testimony of Senator Anne Carney introducing*  
**LD 505, “An Act to Update Processes and Fees in the Probate Court System,”**  
*before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*  
March 6, 2025

Representative Kuhn and esteemed colleagues on the Committee on Judiciary, I am Senator Anne Carney, proudly representing Senate District 29, which includes South Portland, Cape Elizabeth and part of Scarborough. It is a pleasure to be with you to introduce LD 505, “An Act to Update Processes and Fees in the Probate Court System.”

The registers of the probate in Maine’s counties brought this legislation to me. I agreed to sponsor the bill because it is necessary to support the important work the registers of the probate do each day to provide justice for Maine people. This bill, if enacted, will increase the fees for most probate court services to keep up with rising costs of personnel, technology, and court administration. It will also index fees to inflation after this year. There are a few other reforms included in this bill, which I will allow the registers to explain to you.

Some of you may not know all of the ways in which county probate courts and the elected registers who run them help Mainers. Probate courts handle the estates of deceased and missing persons, guardianship of incapacitated adults and minor children, trusts, legal name changes of adults and minors, adoption matters, and other family matters.

In many cases, registers of the probate help Mainers work through these processes without them having to go to the expense of hiring an attorney. This saves money for many Mainers who may have limited resources and ensures our justice system is as accessible as possible.

However, the cost of providing these services has increased. Probate fees have not been increased in 4 years, during which time inflation in the U.S. has caused overall prices to increase by about 20%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

We must invest in the important services that our probate courts and the hardworking registers of the probate who run them provide for Maine people. I hope you will join me in supporting this bill.

Officials from Maine's probate courts will follow my testimony. I welcome any questions you may have, but I also invite you to direct further questions to them.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to introduce this bill.

Anne Carney  
State Senator, District 29