



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **Abigail W. Griffin**

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*Testimony of Rep. Abigail Griffin introducing*  
**LD 1108, "An Act Regarding the Reunification of Foster  
Children With Their Parents"**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services*

April 4, 2025

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyers and the wonderful members of the Health and Human Services committee. My name is Abigail Griffin and I represent House District 34, which is the special towns of Glenburn, Levant, and Kenduskeag. I am here to present **LD 1108, "An Act Regarding the Reunification of Foster Children With Their Parents"**.

The federal Title IV-E program requires states to make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify families. Maine's Department of Health and Human Services must create a rehabilitation plan to address family issues that pose risks to a child. This plan should include regular visitation while parents engage in services, along with a system to measure progress, ensuring the child's physical and emotional well-being.

Initially, families receive a safety plan. If the plan fails and children are removed from the home, we must prioritize their protection while considering the emotional impact. LD 1108 aims to strengthen the reunification process, particularly for parents struggling with substance use disorder. The bill introduces random drug screenings, extended treatment periods, and unscheduled visitations. Recovery is a lifelong and courageous process that requires time. Parenting is stressful, and for reunification to be successful and lasting, parents need a strong foundation.

A key concern is the risk of reactive attachment disorder (RAD) in children removed from their homes, as highlighted by resource parents. RAD stems from physical or emotional neglect or frequent changes in caregivers, particularly in foster care. It can lead to developmental delays, anxiety, PTSD, anger management issues, and long-term challenges such as eating disorders, substance abuse, and relationship difficulties. While RAD is a lifelong condition, it can be successfully managed with counseling and support.

Thank you for your time. I will try to answer questions. I have cited below articles I used to research this topic.

Abigail W. Griffin  
State Representative

Citations:

<https://myclevelandclinc.org/health/diseases/17904-reactive-attachment-disorder>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9736782/>

<https://courts.maine.gov/courts/family/child-protection.html>