



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Anne-Marie Mastraccio presenting

LD 1150, An Act to Require Reporting of Sheltering or Aiding Missing Children

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and esteemed colleagues on the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Anne-Marie Mastraccio, and I represent House District 142, which includes part of the City of Sanford and part of the Village of Springvale. I am before you today to present **LD 1150, An Act to Require Reporting of Sheltering or Aiding Missing Children.**

This legislation proposes that a person who knowingly shelters a missing or runaway child for more than 24 hours without the consent of the missing child's parent or guardian must provide information regarding the missing child's location and condition to a law enforcement officer if contacted and asked about the child. A person who violates this provision would be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$250.

It is not a crime in Maine to run away from home, nor is it against the law to harbor a runaway. I am not proposing such a law. The teenage years can be trying for parents and teens and sometimes a cooling off period can be helpful for all parties. If your 16-year-old decides to run away and ends up at someone else's home, you might suspect where they are but the adult in that home is under no obligation to even confirm that fact. Sometimes all the parent needs to know is that their child is safe and sheltered and not on the street. This bill would do that without forcing the juvenile to return home, while still giving police the ability to assure the juvenile's safety and location. I believe it would go a long way in alleviating the worry of a parent without creating an atmosphere where the juvenile is treated like a criminal.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this bill and I look forward to a discussion on this important issue.