



# Administrative Office of the Courts

P.O. Box 4820, Portland, Maine 04112-4820

Tel: (207) 822-0792 FAX: (207) 822-0781 TTY: (207) 822-0701

---

Julia Finn, Esq.  
Legislative Analyst

Tel: (207) 822-0767  
[julia.finn@courts.maine.gov](mailto:julia.finn@courts.maine.gov)

## **Judicial Branch testimony in favor of LD 1022, An Act to Protect and Increase Access to Justice in Civil Legal Matters for Persons with Low Incomes:**

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Julie Finn and I represent the Judicial Branch. I would like to provide testimony in favor of LD 1022.

The Judicial Branch strongly supports access to justice. Without access to a lawyer, access to justice is limited. Anyone who has seen a proceeding where a non-lawyer is trying to navigate the Rules of Evidence and the Rule of Civil Procedure in a courtroom can see that this is an almost impossible task. Add to that the statutes and case law that governs a particular situation, and it is hard to see how someone who is not schooled in the law can protect his or her rights and gain a successful outcome.

The funding provided by this bill will enable several legal services assistance agencies to support additional initiatives and increase the number of Maine people who have access to an attorney. Having an attorney representing a party creates efficiencies for the court, faster resolution of cases, and often, a better result for the litigants.

Others who will testify today will speak more eloquently about specific people and cases that have benefitted from the provision of civil legal aid.

Thank you for your time.