

Family Law Advisory Commission  
LD 2142, "An Act to Establish Guidance for Awarding General Spousal Support"

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

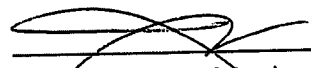
Good afternoon. My name is John Martin. I am a resident of Rockport. I am a Judge of the Maine District Court and Chair of the Family Law Advisory Commission. I am not here on behalf of the Judicial Branch. I am honored to appear before you today in my capacity as Chair of FLAC regarding LD 2142. I want to thank Senator Carney for sponsoring the bill and express my appreciation to this Committee for your time and consideration here today.

Pursuant to its statutory mandate under 19-A M.R.S. § 354(2), the Maine Family Law Advisory Commission submits LD 2142, "An Act to Establish Guidance for Awarding General Spousal Support," to address longstanding concerns regarding the unpredictability and inconsistency of spousal support awards in Maine.

While current law requires courts to consider numerous statutory factors, it provides little guidance on how to determine the amount of support, often resulting in disparate outcomes for similarly situated litigants and increased litigation. LD 2142 reorganizes 19-A M.R.S. § 951-A and introduces a rebuttable presumptive calculation to provide a uniform starting point for analysis, while preserving judicial discretion and requiring continued consideration of existing statutory factors and case law. The proposal reflects extensive study and stakeholder input and is designed to improve predictability, fairness, efficiency, and access to justice, particularly for self-represented litigants, without abandoning Maine's established spousal support jurisprudence.

The Maine Family Law Advisory Commission believes that LD 2142 represents a thoughtful and measured step toward improving the fairness, predictability, and efficiency of spousal support determinations in Maine. The proposal preserves judicial discretion, respects existing jurisprudence, and provides clearer guidance to courts and litigants alike. Again, I want to express my appreciation for the Committee's consideration of this legislation and its continued commitment to ensuring that Maine's family law system serves families, children, and the judiciary as effectively and equitably as possible.

Dated: January 22, 2026

  
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Hon. John Wm. Martin  
Judge, Maine District Court  
Chair, Family Law Advisory Commission