

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Child and Family Services
11 State House Station
2 Anthony Avenue
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel.: (207) 624-7900; Toll Free: (877) 680-5866
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay); Fax: (207) 624-5553

**Testimony of
Todd A. Landry, Ed.D., Director
Office of Child and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

**LD 58 – An Act to Improve Information Sharing by Criminal Justice Agencies with
Government Agencies Responsible for Investigating Child or Adult Abuse**

Hearing Date: February 10, 2021

Good Morning Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

I am Todd Landry, Director of the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) within the Department of Health and Human Services and I am here today to testify in support of LD 58, An Act to Improve Information Sharing by Criminal Justice Agencies with Government Agencies Responsible for Investigating Child or Adult Abuse. This bill expands the authority of criminal justice agencies to share confidential intelligence and investigative records with OCFS.

Currently the authority for criminal justice agencies to share their information is contained in paragraph 1 of §806 and that section contains the requirement that to share intelligence and investigative record information the information must concern the investigation of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This bill would create a new section without that requirement, which will ensure criminal justice entities can share information without requiring proof of a nexus between the information requested and potential abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This change will expand OCFS' ability to obtain investigation and intelligence information which is critically important to our office's work to ensure child safety and wellbeing.

This bill will solve a significant issue with our current ability to obtain information that pertains to child safety and wellbeing, regardless of the nexus between the crime investigated and a child. For example, currently we can only obtain records of a domestic violence incident if a child was present during that incident. Domestic violence can have serious implications for child safety and wellbeing, and any incident of domestic violence involving a parent may inform a child welfare investigation or case decisions, regardless of whether or not a child was actually present for the incident. The change proposed in this bill will enhance OCFS' child safety decisions by providing staff with a more complete picture of a parent, guardian, or other involved adult's criminal justice involvement.

I urge you to support LD 58. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.