



**Maine Medical
Association**



February 28, 2025

Testimony of Dr. Joe Anderson in favor of LD 537

**On behalf of the Maine Medical Association, Maine Osteopathic Association,
and the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics**

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary, my name is Joe Anderson. I am a resident of Portland, a pediatric hospitalist in Lewiston, and I serve on the board of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I am also a member of both the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association. I am here to express our support for LD 537, "An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and Authorize a Related Civil Action."

As physicians, we are committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of children in Maine. In today's digital age, young people face unprecedented risks to their privacy and safety. Doxing—the public release of personal, identifiable information with the intent to intimidate, harass, or harm—poses a particularly severe threat to minors. Unlike adults, children and adolescents may lack the resources, knowledge, or ability to protect themselves from the potentially devastating consequences of having their personal information exposed online.

The repercussions of doxing can be severe and long-lasting. Victims may experience significant emotional distress, anxiety, and depression. They may also face threats of physical harm, cyberbullying, and, in extreme cases, the need to relocate or change schools for their safety. The potential for trauma is profound, and the effects can extend well into adulthood.

This bill takes a crucial step in protecting minors by explicitly prohibiting the doxing of children and adolescents. By allowing parents or legal guardians to pursue civil action on behalf of affected minors, it provides an avenue for accountability and recourse. The ability to seek injunctive relief, damages, and other remedies ensures that families have the legal tools necessary to protect their children and hold perpetrators accountable.

Protecting minors from doxing is not just an ethical, legal, or policy issue. As we work to address a national crisis in child and adolescent mental health, it is a public health and safety imperative. We urge you to support this legislation as part of our collective responsibility to safeguard children from online harm and ensure they can grow and thrive without fear of targeted harassment.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Anderson" followed by a small flourish.

Joe Anderson, DO, FAAP

Advocacy Chair, Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Member, Maine Medical Association & Maine Osteopathic Association