



FAMILY ADVOCACY OF MAINE

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Testimony of Julian Richter, in support of LD 492: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Provide for Parental Rights

**Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
Tuesday March 4, 2025**

Senator Carey, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary, I am offering testimony in support of LD 492: **A RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Provide for Parental Rights**

As a dedicated family defender and advocate for family and parental rights, I strongly support the proposed Constitutional Amendment offered in LD 492. While Maine's Constitution does include the right to family integrity and parental rights through Article I, § 6-A, those rights are increasingly being infringed by the State's *parens patriae* and policing powers. This has led to a crisis in which the judgment of children's parents is being overruled and substituted for the judgment of State agents.

The proposed Constitutional Amendment in LD 492 would make it abundantly clear to Government actors and State agents that absent affirmative proof of abuse or neglect, that parents have the right to the care and control for the upbringing of their children.

There are few, if any, rights more important to our society than the right to raise a family. Without Constitutional protections, I fear that those rights will be consumed by the increasing power of the State.

Currently, I am the President of the Maine Parental Rights Attorneys Association ("MEPRAA"), Statewide Resource Counsel for Child Protective Cases through the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services ("MCLIS"), and a member of the Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel ("MCWAP"). I urged you to vote "ought to pass" on the Constitutional Amendment contained in LD 429.

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