

Nicole S
Naples
LD 492

I am writing today to express my strong support for the fundamental rights of parents to guide the upbringing, education, and well-being of their children. As a parent, I believe it is critical that Maine upholds the natural, inherent, and unalienable rights of parents in making decisions that are in the best interest of their children.

Parental rights are not merely a matter of personal preference—they are deeply rooted in our nation's history and legal tradition. The Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed that parents have the primary role in the care, custody, and control of their children. Parents are in the best position to understand their child's needs and provide the love, guidance, and support necessary for their healthy development.

When the government oversteps its role and interferes with parental decision-making, it risks replacing individualized care with a one-size-fits-all approach that may not reflect a child's unique needs, values, or well-being. While the state has an important role in protecting children from harm, it should not undermine the fundamental relationship between parents and their children or assume authority in matters best left to families.

Preserving parental rights means ensuring that parents have the freedom to:

- Direct their child's education, whether through public, private, homeschool, or alternative learning models.
- Make informed decisions about their child's medical care, free from coercion or unnecessary governmental intervention.
- Instill values, traditions, and beliefs that align with their family's moral and cultural foundation.

The strength of our communities is built upon strong families. Undermining parental rights risks weakening the very foundation of our society, leading to unintended consequences that may ultimately harm children rather than protect them. Parents are not obstacles to be bypassed but partners in raising future generations.

I urge Maine's lawmakers to uphold and safeguard the unalienable rights of parents in all legislative matters concerning children and families. By doing so, we ensure that Maine remains a state that values family integrity, individual liberties, and the well-being of our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole