

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 524

Date: 1/29/26

(Filing No. H-789)

**JUDICIARY**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
132ND LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 343, L.D. 524, "An Act to Reduce Trafficking in the State"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'An Act to Protect Children from Technology-facilitated Sexual Abuse'**

Amend the bill by inserting after the title and before the enacting clause the following:

**'Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** this Act extends the prohibitions in current state law against the creation, dissemination and possession of sexually explicit material depicting minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct to similarly prohibit the creation, dissemination and possession of images that have been modified or generated, including through the use of artificial intelligence, or AI, technology, so that the images appear to depict minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct; and

**Whereas,** perpetrators of these crimes have already begun creating child sexual abuse material using technology through which they modify existing images of identifiable children or through which they wholly create images that appear to depict children engaged in sexually explicit conduct, but these perpetrators cannot be prosecuted because this conduct is not currently prohibited by state law; and

**Whereas,** as generative artificial intelligence technology continues to advance, it is becoming more and more difficult to distinguish between unaltered child sexual abuse material subject to prosecution under current law and modified or AI-generated child sexual abuse material not currently subject to prosecution; and

**Whereas,** it is essential to clarify state law as soon as possible to prevent sexual exploitation of children; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

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1 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,  
2 therefore,'

3 Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the  
4 following:

5 'Sec. 1. 17-A MRSA §281, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §12, is amended  
6 to read:

7 **§281. Definitions**

8 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms  
9 have the following meanings.

10 1. "Disseminate" means to manufacture, publish, send, promulgate, distribute, exhibit,  
11 issue, furnish, sell or transfer or to offer or agree to do any of these acts.

12 1-A. "Child sexual abuse material" means any image, including a computer-generated  
13 image, that depicts or has been created or modified so that it appears to depict a minor,  
14 regardless of whether that depiction is an identifiable child, engaged in sexually explicit  
15 conduct.

16 1-B. "Generative AI or machine learning" means any computer algorithm or model  
17 that creates content, including, but not limited to, text, images, audio or video.

18 1-C. "Identifiable child" means a person:

19 A. Who is recognizable as an actual person by that person's face, likeness or other  
20 distinguishing characteristic, such as a unique birthmark or other recognizable feature;  
21 and

22 B. Who was a minor at the time an unaltered image was created or whose likeness  
23 when the person was a minor was used in creating, adapting or modifying an image.

24 "Identifiable child" does not require proof of the actual identity of the identifiable child.

25 1-D. "Image" means something that is made, captured, generated or saved as a print,  
26 negative, slide, motion picture, photograph, computer data file, animation, video,  
27 livestream or other mechanically, electronically or chemically reproduced visual image or  
28 material.

29 2. "Minor" means a person who has not attained ~~18~~ 16 years of age.

30 ~~3. "Photograph" means to make, capture, generate or save a print, negative, slide,~~  
31 ~~motion picture, computer data file, videotape or other mechanically, electronically or~~  
32 ~~chemically reproduced visual image or material.~~

33 3-A. "Obscene material" means material that:

34 A. To the average individual, applying contemporary community standards, appeals  
35 to the prurient interest. For purposes of this paragraph, if it appears from the nature of  
36 an image or the circumstances of the image's dissemination, distribution or exhibition  
37 that the image is designed for clearly defined deviant sexual groups, the appeal of the  
38 image must be judged with reference to its intended recipient group;

39 B. Depicts or describes, in a patently offensive manner, ultimate sexual acts, excretory  
40 functions, masturbation or lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

# COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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C. Considered as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. For purposes of this paragraph:

(1) The fact that the defendant knew that the image depicts a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct is a factor that may be considered in making the determination that an image taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value; and

(2) If circumstances of production, presentation, sale, dissemination, distribution or exhibition indicate that an image is being exploited by the defendant for the sake of its prurient appeal, this evidence is probative with respect to the nature of the image and may justify the conclusion that the image lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

4. "Sexually explicit conduct" means any of the following acts:

- A. A sexual act;
- B. Bestiality;
- C. Masturbation;
- D. Sadomasochistic abuse for the purpose of sexual stimulation;
- E. Lewd exhibition of the genitals, anus or pubic area of a person. An exhibition is considered lewd if the exhibition is designed for the purpose of eliciting or attempting to elicit a sexual response in the intended viewer; or
- F. Conduct that creates the appearance of the acts in paragraphs A to D and also exhibits any uncovered or covered portions of the genitals, anus or pubic area.

Sec. 2. 17-A MRSA §282, as amended by PL 2019, c. 113, Pt. B, §15, is further amended to read:

**§282. Sexual exploitation of minor**

1. A person is guilty of sexual exploitation of a minor if:  
A. Knowing or intending that the conduct will be ~~photographed~~ used to create an image for the purpose of arousing or gratifying the sexual desire of that person or another person, the person intentionally or knowingly employs, solicits, entices, persuades or uses ~~another person a minor~~, not that person's spouse, who has not in fact attained 16 years of age, to engage in sexually explicit conduct to create child sexual abuse material, except that it is not a violation of this paragraph if the ~~other person~~ minor is 14 or 15 years of age and the person is less than 5 years older than the ~~other person~~ minor. Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime;

A-1. Knowing or intending that the conduct will be ~~photographed~~ used to create an image, the person intentionally or knowingly compels or induces by any threat another person, not that person's spouse, who is in fact a minor, to engage in sexually explicit conduct. Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime. For purposes of this paragraph, "minor" means a person who has not attained 18 years of age;

A-2. The person intentionally or knowingly modifies or alters an image of an identifiable child to create child sexual abuse material, except that it is not a violation of this paragraph if the minor is 14 or 15 years of age and the person is less than 5 years older than the minor. Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime;

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- 1            A-3. The person intentionally or knowingly manufactures or creates, including using  
2            generative AI or machine learning, obscene material that is child sexual abuse material  
3            and the person knows or has reason to know that the material is child sexual abuse  
4            material. Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime;
- 5            B. The person violates paragraph A or, ~~A-1, A-2 or A-3~~ and, at the time of the offense,  
6            the person has one or more prior convictions under this section or for engaging in  
7            substantially similar conduct to that contained in this section in another jurisdiction.  
8            Violation of this paragraph is a Class A crime;
- 9            C. The person violates paragraph A or, ~~A-1, A-2 or A-3~~ and the minor or identifiable  
10           child has not ~~in fact~~ attained 12 years of age. Violation of this paragraph is a Class A  
11           crime;
- 12           D. Being a parent, legal guardian or other person having care or custody of ~~another~~  
13           ~~person who has not in fact attained 16 years of age~~ a minor, that person ~~knowingly or~~  
14           ~~intentionally or knowingly~~ permits ~~that person who has not in fact attained 16 years of~~  
15           ~~age to engage in sexually explicit conduct, knowing or intending that the conduct will~~  
16           ~~be photographed~~ the minor to create child sexual abuse material. Violation of this  
17           paragraph is a Class B crime;
- 18           E. The person violates paragraph D and, at the time of the offense, the person has one  
19           or more prior convictions under this section or for engaging in substantially similar  
20           conduct to that contained in this section in another jurisdiction. Violation of this  
21           paragraph is a Class A crime; or
- 22           F. The person violates paragraph D and the minor has not ~~in fact~~ attained 12 years of  
23           age. Violation of this paragraph is a Class A crime.
- 24           2. The following mandatory minimum terms of imprisonment apply to sexual  
25           exploitation of a minor.
- 26           A. A court shall impose upon a person convicted under subsection 1, paragraph A,  
27           ~~A-1, A-2, A-3~~ or D a sentencing alternative involving a term of imprisonment of at  
28           least 5 years.
- 29           B. A court shall impose upon a person convicted under subsection 1, paragraph B or  
30           E a sentencing alternative involving a term of imprisonment of at least 10 years.
- 31           The court may not suspend a minimum term of imprisonment imposed under this section  
32           unless it sets forth in detail, in writing, the reasons for suspending the sentence. The court  
33           shall consider the nature and circumstances of the crime, the physical and mental well-  
34           being of the minor and the history and character of the defendant and may only suspend  
35           the minimum term if the court is of the opinion that the exceptional features of the case  
36           justify the imposition of another sentence. Section 9-A governs the use of prior convictions  
37           when determining a sentence.
- 38           3. **Aggravating sentencing factor of victim under 12 years of age.** If the State  
39           pleads and proves that a crime under this section was committed against ~~an individual a~~  
40           minor, including an identifiable child, who had not attained 12 years of age, the court, in  
41           determining the appropriate sentence, shall treat the age of the ~~victim~~ minor as an  
42           aggravating sentencing factor.

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1        4. The following may be reasonably inferred from the contents of an image or may be  
2 established through competent medical evidence or other expert testimony:

3        A. The age of an individual depicted in the image;

4        B. The age of an individual who appears to be depicted in the image; and

5        C. That an individual depicted or who appears to be depicted in the image is an  
6 identifiable child.

7        5. A person is subject to prosecution pursuant to this section in this State if the person,  
8 the minor or the identifiable child was in the State at the time of the offense.

9        **Sec. 3. 17-A MRSA §283**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 394, §3, is further amended  
10 to read:

11 **§283. Dissemination of ~~sexually-explicit~~ child sexual abuse material**

12        1. A person is guilty of dissemination of ~~sexually-explicit~~ child sexual abuse material  
13 if that person:

14        A. ~~The person intentionally~~ Intentionally or knowingly disseminates or possesses with  
15 intent to disseminate any ~~book, magazine, newspaper, print, negative, slide, motion~~  
16 ~~picture, videotape, computer data file or other mechanically, electronically or~~  
17 ~~chemically reproduced visual image or~~ child sexual abuse material that depicts any  
18 ~~person who has not in fact attained 16 years of age~~ of an identifiable child who the  
19 person knows or has reason to know is a ~~person under 16 years of age engaging in~~  
20 ~~sexually explicit conduct~~ minor, except that it is not a violation of this paragraph if the  
21 ~~person depicted~~ identifiable child is 14 or 15 years of age and the person is less than 5  
22 years older than the ~~person depicted~~ identifiable child. Violation of this paragraph is a  
23 Class C crime;

24        A-1. Intentionally or knowingly disseminates or possesses with intent to disseminate  
25 any obscene material that is child sexual abuse material, including an image created  
26 using generative AI or machine learning, and the person knows or has reason to know  
27 that the material is child sexual abuse material. Violation of this paragraph is a Class  
28 C crime;

29        B. ~~The person violates~~ Violates paragraph A or A-1 and, at the time of the offense, has  
30 one or more prior convictions under this section or for engaging in substantially similar  
31 conduct to that contained in this section in another jurisdiction. Violation of this  
32 paragraph is a Class B crime;

33        C. ~~The person intentionally or knowingly disseminates or possesses with intent to~~  
34 ~~disseminate any book, magazine, newspaper, print, negative, slide, motion picture,~~  
35 ~~videotape, computer data file or other mechanically, electronically or chemically~~  
36 ~~reproduced visual image or material that depicts any minor who is less than 12 years~~  
37 ~~of age who the person knows or has reason to know is a minor less than 12 years of~~  
38 ~~age engaging in sexually explicit conduct~~ Violates paragraph A and the identifiable  
39 child in the child sexual abuse material has not attained 12 years of age and the person  
40 knows or has reason to know the identifiable child has not attained 12 years of age.  
41 Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime; or

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1 C-1. Violates paragraph A-1 and the person knows or has reason to know that the child  
2 sexual abuse material appears to depict a minor who has not attained 12 years of age.  
3 Violation of this paragraph is a Class B crime; or

4 ~~D. The person violates~~ Violates paragraph C or C-1 and, at the time of the offense, has  
5 one or more prior convictions under this section or for engaging in substantially similar  
6 conduct to that contained in this section in another jurisdiction. Violation of this  
7 paragraph is a Class A crime.

8 Section 9-A governs the use of prior convictions when determining a sentence.

9 2. For the purposes of this section, possession of ~~10~~ 100 or more ~~copies~~ images of any  
10 of the materials as described in subsection 1 gives rise to a permissible inference under the  
11 Maine Rules of Evidence, Rule 303 that the person possesses those items with intent to  
12 disseminate.

13 3. For purposes of this section, any element of age of ~~the person depicted~~ a minor or  
14 identifiable child means the age of the ~~person~~ minor or identifiable child at the time of the  
15 sexually explicit conduct ~~occurred in the child sexual abuse material~~, not the age of the  
16 ~~person depicted~~ minor or identifiable child at the time of dissemination or possession of  
17 the ~~sexually explicit visual image or child sexual abuse material~~.

18 4. The following may be reasonably inferred from the contents of an image or may be  
19 established through competent medical evidence or other expert testimony:

20 A. The age of an individual depicted in the image;

21 B. The age of an individual who appears to be depicted in the image; and

22 C. That an individual depicted or who appears to be depicted in the image is an  
23 identifiable child.

24 **Sec. 4. 17-A MRSA §284**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 394, §4, is further amended  
25 to read:

26 **§284. Possession of ~~sexually explicit~~ child sexual abuse material**

27 1. A person is guilty of possession of ~~sexually explicit~~ child sexual abuse material if  
28 that person:

29 A. Intentionally or knowingly transports, exhibits, purchases, possesses or accesses  
30 with intent to view any ~~book, magazine, newspaper, print, negative, slide, motion~~  
31 ~~picture, computer data file, videotape or other mechanically, electronically or~~  
32 ~~chemically reproduced visual image or~~ child sexual abuse material that the person  
33 knows or should know depicts another person engaging in sexually explicit conduct,  
34 and: of an identifiable child who the person knows or has reason to know is a minor,  
35 except that it is not a violation of this paragraph if the identifiable child is 14 or 15  
36 years of age and the person is less than 5 years older than the identifiable child.

37 (1) ~~The other person has not in fact attained 16 years of age; or~~

38 (2) ~~The person knows or has reason to know that the other person has not attained~~  
39 ~~16 years of age.~~

40 It is not a violation of this paragraph if the person depicted is 14 or 15 years of age and  
41 the person is less than 5 years older than the person depicted.

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1 Violation of this paragraph is a Class D crime;

2 A-1. Intentionally or knowingly transports, exhibits, purchases, possesses or accesses  
3 with intent to view any obscene material that is child sexual abuse material, including  
4 an image of a minor created using generative AI or machine learning, and the person  
5 knows or has reason to know that the material is child sexual abuse material. Violation  
6 of this paragraph is a Class D crime;

7 B. Violates paragraph A or A-1 and, at the time of the offense, has one or more prior  
8 convictions under this section or for engaging in substantially similar conduct to that  
9 contained in this section in another jurisdiction. Violation of this paragraph is a Class  
10 C crime;

11 ~~C. Intentionally or knowingly transports, exhibits, purchases, possesses or accesses~~  
12 ~~with intent to view any book, magazine, newspaper, print, negative, slide, motion~~  
13 ~~picture, computer data file, videotape or other mechanically, electronically or~~  
14 ~~chemically reproduced visual image or material that the person knows or should know~~  
15 ~~depicts another person engaging in sexually explicit conduct, and: Violates paragraph~~  
16 ~~A and the identifiable child in the child sexual abuse material has not attained 12 years~~  
17 ~~of age or the person knows or has reason to know that the identifiable child has not~~  
18 ~~attained 12 years of age.~~

19 (1) ~~The other person has not in fact attained 12 years of age; or~~

20 (2) ~~The person knows or has reason to know that the other person has not attained~~  
21 ~~12 years of age.~~

22 Violation of this paragraph is a Class C crime; or

23 C-1. Violates paragraph A-1 and the person knows or has reason to know that the child  
24 sexual abuse material appears to depict a minor who has not attained 12 years of age.  
25 Violation of this paragraph is a Class C crime; or

26 D. Violates paragraph C or C-1 and, at the time of the offense, has one or more prior  
27 convictions under this section or for engaging in substantially similar conduct to that  
28 contained in this section in another jurisdiction. Violation of this paragraph is a Class  
29 B crime.

30 Section 9-A governs the use of prior convictions when determining a sentence.

31 2. It is a defense to a prosecution under this section that the person depicted was the  
32 spouse of the person possessing the ~~sexually explicit~~ child sexual abuse material at the time  
33 the material was produced.

34 3. ~~The age of the person depicted and that the person depicted is an actual person~~  
35 ~~following may be reasonably inferred from the depiction. Competent medical evidence or~~  
36 ~~other expert testimony may be used to establish the age and authenticity of the person~~  
37 ~~depicted; contents of an image or may be established through competent medical evidence~~  
38 ~~or other expert testimony;~~

39 A. The age of an individual depicted in the image;

40 B. The age of an individual who appears to be depicted in the image; and

41 C. That an individual depicted or who appears to be depicted in the image is an  
42 identifiable child.



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COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 343, L.D. 524

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evidence or other expert testimony. Under current law, this rule of evidence only explicitly applies to possession crimes, not to crimes involving the creation or dissemination of prohibited child pornography.

The amendment also adds an emergency preamble and emergency clause.

**FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

(See attached)

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 524

LR 1129(02)

An Act to Reduce Trafficking in the State

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-789)  
Committee: Judiciary  
Fiscal Note Required: Yes

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## Fiscal Note

Potential current biennium cost increase - General Fund

Minor revenue increase - General Fund

Minor revenue increase – Other Special Revenue Funds

### Correctional and Judicial Impact Statements

The bill makes several changes to the laws related to sexual exploitation of minors. It is unclear how many additional individuals could be convicted of crimes and incarcerated who otherwise would not have been. The current average cost of incarcerating one individual for a single year is \$55,203. No funding has been included in the bill at this time.

The additional workload associated with the minimal number of new felony cases filed in the court system does not require additional funding at this time. The collection of additional fines will increase General Fund or other dedicated revenue by minor amounts.