

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1974

H.P. 1318

House of Representatives, May 13, 2025

An Act to Affirm Parental Rights

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative CARUSO of Caratunk.
Cosponsored by Representatives: BABIN of Fort Fairfield, CHAPMAN of Auburn,
FREDERICKS of Sanford, POIRIER of Skowhegan, Senator: TIMBERLAKE of
Androscoggin.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §14** is enacted to read:

3 **§14. Parents joint natural guardians; fundamental right**

4 **1. Parents joint natural guardians of children.** Parents are the joint natural
5 guardians of their minor children and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and
6 services of their children. Neither parent has any rights paramount to the rights of the other
7 with reference to any matter affecting their children.

8 **2. Fundamental right.** The liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and
9 care of the parent's child is a fundamental right.

10 **3. Construction.** This section may not be construed to affect the decision of a court
11 regarding parental rights and responsibilities or the termination of parental rights.

12 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §4003-A** is enacted to read:

13 **§4003-A. Parents joint natural guardians; fundamental right**

14 **1. Parents joint natural guardians of children.** Parents are the joint natural
15 guardians of their minor children and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and
16 services of their children. Neither parent has any rights paramount to the rights of the other
17 with reference to any matter affecting their children.

18 **2. Fundamental right.** The liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and
19 care of the parent's child is a fundamental right.

20 **3. Construction.** This section may not be construed to affect the decision of a court
21 regarding parental rights and responsibilities or the termination of parental rights.

22 **SUMMARY**

23 This bill provides that parents are the joint natural guardians of their minor children
24 and are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control and services of their children. It also
25 provides that the liberty of a parent to direct the upbringing, education and care of the
26 parent's child is a fundamental right.