MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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	FIRST RE	GULAR SI	ESSION			
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Legislative Documen	t				No.	1386
H.P. 969		House of	f Represe	ntatives,	April 25,	198:
Submitted by the I	Department o	f Human	Services j	pursuant	to Joint	Rule
24. Reference to the C	ommittee on	Judiciary		d and ord DWIN H		
Presented by Represent Cosponsored by So Melendy of Rockland a	enator Carpe	nter of Arc	oostook,		itative	
	STATE	OF MAI	NE			
	IN THE YE.					
AN ACT	to Prote	ct Abus	ed Chi	ldren.		
Be it enacted by follows:	y the Peo	ple of	the St	ate of	Maine	as
Sec. 1. 4 read:	MRSA §1	152, si	ub-§6,	is (enacted	i to
6. Proceed:	ings rela	ted to	licens	ure of	adult	and
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statutes or rule dence, in any	es govern proceedi:					
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- Sec. 2. 15 MRSA §1205, sub-§§1 and 2, as enacted by PL 1983, c. 411, are repealed and the following enacted in their place:
- 1. Mental or physical well-being of a person. On motion of the attorney for the State and at an in camera hearing, the court finds that the mental or physical well-being of that person will more likely than not be harmed if that person were to testify in open court; and
- 2. Examination and cross-examination. Pursuant to order of court made on such a motion, the statement is made under oath, subject to all of the rights of confrontation secured to an accused by the Constitution of Maine and the United States Constitution and the statement has been recorded by any means approved by the court, and is made in the presence of a judge.
- 18 Sec. 3. 17-A MRSA §207, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 19 1975, c. 499, §1, is amended to read:
 - 2. Assault is a Class D crime, except in instances of bodily injury to another who has not attained his 10th birthday, provided that the actor has attained his 18th birthday, in which case, it is a Class C crime.
 - Sec. 4. 17-A MRSA §251, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 1975, c. 740, §44, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

C. "Sexual act" means:

- (1) Any act between 2 persons involving direct physical contact between the sex organs of one and the mouth or anus of the other, or direct physical contact between the sex organs of one and the sex organs of the other;
- (2) Any act between a person and an animal being used by another person which act involves direct physical contact between the sex organs of one and the mouth or anus of the other, or direct physical contact be-

1 2	tween the sex organs of one and the sex organs of the other;
3 4 5 6 7 8 9	(3) Any act involving direct physical contact between the sex organs or anus of one and an instrument or device manipulated by another person when that act is done for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire or for the purpose of causing bodily injury or offensive physical contact; or
10 11	(4) A sexual act which may be proved with- out allegation or proof of penetration.
12 13	<pre>Sec. 5. 17-A MRSA §251, sub-§1, ¶D, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 499, §1, is amended to read:</pre>
14 15 16 17 18	D. "Sexual contact" means any touching of the genitals, sex organs or anus, directly or through clothing, other than as would constitute a sexual act, for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire or for the purpose of causing bodily injury or offensive physical contact.
20 21	Sec. 6. 17-A MRSA §251, sub-§1, ¶F is enacted to read:
22 23	F. "Sex organs" means sexual reproductive organs.
24 25	<pre>Sec. 7. 17-A MRSA §253, sub-§2, as amended by PL 1983, c. 326, §§1 to 3, is further amended to read:</pre>
26 27	2. If he engages in sexual intercourse or a sexual act with another person, not his spouse, and
28 29 30 31	A. He has substantially impaired the other person's power to appraise or control his sex acts by administering or employing drugs, intoxicants, or other similar means; ex
32 33 34	B. He compels or induces the other to engage in such sexual intercourse or sexual act by any threat; $e_{\mathbf{r}}$

C. The other person suffers from mental disability that is reasonably apparent or known to the
actor, and which in fact renders the other substantially incapable of appraising the nature of
the contact involved; er

- D. The other person is unconscious or otherwise physically incapable of resisting and has not consented to such sexual intercourse or sexual act;
- E. The other person is in official custody as a probationer or a parolee, or is detained in a hospital, prison or other institution, and the actor has supervisory or disciplinary authority over such other person; ex
 - F. The other person has not in fact attained his 18th birthday and is a student enrolled in a private or public elementary, secondary or special education school, facility or institution and the actor is a teacher, employee or other official having instructional, supervisory or disciplinary authority over the student;
 - G. The other person has not attained his 18th birthday and the actor is a parent, stepparent, foster parent, guardian or other similar person responsible for the long-term general care and welfare of that other person; or
- H. The other person has not attained his 18th birthday and is a resident in a private or public nursery school, children's home, day-care facility, residential child-care facility, drug treatment center, camp or similar school, facility or institution regularly providing care or services for children, and the actor is a teacher, employee or other person having instructional, supervisory or disciplinary authority over that other person.
- 37 Sec. 8. 17-A MRSA §253, sub-§5, as amended by PL 38 1983, c. 326, §4, is further amended to read:
 - 5. Violation of subsection 2, paragraph paragraphs A, C or and E is a Class B crime. Viola-

- tion of subsection 2, paragraph B, D ex, F, G or H is
 a Class C crime.
- 3 Sec. 9. 17-A MRSA §255, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 499, §1, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:
- 2. Violation of subsection 1, paragraphs A, B, D 6 and E, is a Class D crime. Violation of subsection 7 1, paragraph C, is a Class C crime. The sentencing 8 class for each such violation is one class higher 9 than it would otherwise be if the State pleads 10 proves that sexual contact involved direct physical 11 contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the 12 finger or fingers of the other. That sexual act 13 14 be proved without allegation or proof of penetration.
- 15 Sec. 10. 17-A MRSA §256 is enacted to read:
 - §256. Probation for long-term treatment
- 1. Notwithstanding section 1202, subsection 1, a
 18 person convicted of a Class A, B, C or D crime in
 19 this chapter may be placed on probation for a period
 20 not to exceed the schedule in subsection 2, if long21 term treatment of the actor is indicated.
- 22 2. A person convicted of a Class A, B, C or D
 23 crime may be placed on probation for a period not to
 24 exceed the maximum period of incarceration allowable
 25 under each class of crime.
- 26 Sec. 11. 19 MRSA §764, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1983, c. 583, §26, is further amended to read:
- 28 1. <u>Filing.</u> Any adult who has been abused by a 29 family or household member may seek relief by filing 30 a sworn petition in an appropriate court alleging 31 that abuse.
- When any minor child in the care or custody of a family or household member has been abused by a family or household member, an adult responsible for that child or a representative of the Department of Human Services may seek relief by filing a petition alleg-

ing that abuse.

1 Sec. 12. 19 MRSA §765, sub-§2, as amended by PL 1983, c. 583, §26, is further amended to read:

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- 2. Temporary orders. The court may enter any temporary orders authorized under subsection 4 as it deems necessary to protect the plaintiff or minor child from abuse, on good cause shown in an ex parte proceeding. Immediate and present danger of physical abuse to the plaintiff or minor child shall constitute good cause. Any order shall remain in effect pending a hearing pursuant to subsection 1.
- 11 Sec. 13. 19 MRSA §765, sub-§3, ¶A, as amended by 12 PL 1983, c. 583, §26, is further amended to read:
 - A. When the courthouse is closed and no other provision can be made for the shelter of an abused family or household member or minor child, a complaint may be filed before any District Court Judge or Superior Court Justice. Upon a showing of good cause, as defined in subsection 2, the court may enter any temporary orders authoized under subsection 4 as it deems necessary to protect the plaintiff or minor child from abuse.
- 23 Sec. 14. 19 MRSA §766, sub-§2, as amended by PL 1983, c. 583, §26, is further amended to read:
- 25 Duration. Any protective order or approved 26 consent agreement shall be for a fixed period not to 27 exceed one year. At the expiration of that time, the court may extend an order, upon motion of the plain-28 29 tiff, for such additional time as it deems necessary 30 to protect the plaintiff or minor child from abuse. Upon motion by either party, for sufficient cause, 31 32 the court may modify the order or agreement from time 33 to time as circumstances require.
- 34 Sec. 15. 19 MRSA §766-A, as amended by PL 1983, 35 c. 583, §26, is further amended to read:
- 36 §766-A. Confidentiality of plaintiff's address
- To protect the plaintiff or minor child, the court may order the omission or deletion of his address from any papers available to the public.

1 Sec. 16. 22 MRSA §4007, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2 1979, c. 733, §18, is amended to read:

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- 1. <u>Procedures</u>. All child protection proceedings shall be conducted according to the rules of civil procedure and the rules of evidence, except as provided otherwise in this chapter. At the request of a party, <u>all</u> the proceedings shall be recorded. All proceedings and records shall be closed to the public, unless the court orders otherwise.
- 10 Sec. 17. 22 MRSA §4008, sub-§3, ¶B, as enacted 11 by PL 1979, c. 733, §18, is amended to read:
 - B. A court on its finding that access to those records may be necessary for the determination of any issue before the court or a court requesting a report from the department pursuant to Title 19, section 533 or 751. Access to such a report shall be limited to counsel of record unless otherwise ordered by the court. Access to actual records shall be limited to in camera inspection, unless the court determines that public disclosure of the information is necessary for the resolution of an issue pending before it;
- 23 Sec. 18. 22 MRSA §4011, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1983, c. 354, §3, is further amended to read:
 - 1. Reasonable cause to suspect. When, while actin his professional capacity, a medical osteopathic physician, resident, intern, emergency medical technician, medical examiner, physician's assistant, dentist, dental hygienist, dental assistant, chiropractor, podiatrist, registered or licensed practical nurse, Christian Science practitioner, teacher, guidance counselor, school official, social worker, homemaker, home health aide, medical or social service worker, psychologist, child care personnel, mental health professional or law enforcement official knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, he shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the department. Notwithstanding the definition of abuse or neglect set forth in section 4002, subsection 1, a person required to report under this section shall report to the appropriate

district attorney's office when the suspected abuse or neglect is attributable to a person not responsible for the child.

- A. Whenever a person is required to report in his capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or public or private institution, agency or facility, he shall immediately notify the person in charge of the institution, agency or facility, or his designated agent, who shall then cause a report to be made. The staff may also make a report directly to the department.
 - B. Any person may make a report if that person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected.
 - 6. A person shall not be required to report when the factual basis for knowing or suspecting abuse or neglect comes from treatment of a person responsible for the child, the treatment was sought by that person for a problem of abuse or neglect and there is little threat of serious harm to the child.
 - C. When the basis for knowing or suspecting abuse or neglect comes from the person responsible for the abuse or neglect who is seeking mental health treatment for the problem of abuse or neglect, a report shall be made in accordance with this section. The department shall seek consultation with the reporter if the department initiates civil court action or makes a referral to law enforcement.
- 32 Sec. 19. 22 MRSA §4015, as amended by PL 1983, 33 c. 781, §2, is further amended to read:

34 §4015. Privileged or confidential communications

The husband-wife and physician and psychotherapist-patient privileges under the Maine Rules of Evidence and the confidential quality of communication under Title 20-A, sections 4008 and 6001, to the extent allowed by applicable federal law; Title 24-A, section 4224; and Title 32, sections

- 1 1092-A and 7005; and Title 34-B, section 1207, are abrogated in relation to required reporting, cooper-2 ating with the department or a guardian ad litem in 3 4 investigation or other child protective activity or giving evidence in a child protection proceeding. 5 6 Information released to the department pursuant to 7 this section shall be kept confidential and may not be disclosed by the department except as provided in 8 9 section 4008.
- Statements made to a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist in the course of counseling, therapy or evaluation may not be used against the client in a criminal proceeding except to rebut the client's testimony contradicting those statements. Nothing in this section may limit any responsibilities of the professional pursuant to this Act.
 - Sec. 20. 30 MRSA §509 is enacted to read:
- 18 §509. Investigation of child abuse cases

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- 19 The district attorneys may direct the investiga-20 tion of any offense under Title 17, chapter 93-B, and 21 Title 17-A, chapter 11, or Title 17-A, sections 207, 208 and 556, wherein a victim may not have attained 22 his 18th birthday, and may designate, by geographical 23 boundaries or otherwise, a particular law enforcement 24 25 agency to have primary responsibility for that inves-26 tigation.
 - Any case involving the sexual or physical abuse of children which is discovered by or reported to any law enforcement department or officer shall be immediately reported by that department or officer to the appropriate district attorney or assistant district attorney or, in their absence, to the Attorney General or one of his assistants.
- 34 Sec. 21. 34-B MRSA §1207, sub-§1, ¶B-1 is en-35 acted to read:
- B-1. Information shall be disclosed to the Department of Human Services for the purpose of cooperating in an investigation or any other activity pursuant to Title 15, chapter 507, or Title 22, chapter 1071, pursuant to an agreement be-

tween the department and the Department of Human Services. The agreement, specifying the circumstances and conditions by which disclosure shall be made, shall be promulgated as rules by the department in accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, Title 5, chapter 375;

STATEMENT OF FACT

Section 1 applies to children's and adults' testimony in administrative licensing proceedings.

Children or adults who are victimized in the facility may be further traumatized by having to testify in open court, subjected to intense, often confusing, cross-examination, about the abuse in the presence of th perpetrator whom they often fear. This bill makes it possible for the court to lessen the trauma to child and adult victims by questioning them away from the alleged perpetrator, while still protecting the rights of the accused to cross-examination of the child witness.

This bill allows oral statements made by a child or an adult and recorded to be admitted as evidence and relied upon by the court to the extent of its probative value.

In section 2, the method by which such out-of-court statements are made is left to the court's discretion. The use of videotape or other electronic means is encouraged. An in camera hearing is one which is closed to the general public, but open to the parties, attorneys, witnesses, essential personnel, such as bailiffs, court reporters, clerks, equipment operators and other persons whose presence the presiding judge or justice deems necessary.

Section 3 amends the law so that bodily injury to a child under 10 years of age by an adult will become a Class C crime rather than the present Class D crime of simple assault.

Section 4 amends the definition of a "sexual act" in a number of respects. First, it identifies 3 al-

ternative forms of "sexual act." The first form mirrors the present definition, except that phrase "act of sexual gratification" is removed on the grounds that, given the physical contacts deno concern exists for excluding "innocent" scribed, The 2nd form ensures that direct physical contacts. contacts between the victim's sex organs or anus and the month, anus or sex organs of a nonhuman, e.g., a dog, made use of by a 2nd person are included within the definition of a "sexual act." Stated somewhat 2nd form addresses the same act differently, the specified in the first form, except that these acts are between one person and an animal being used by another person. In this form, the animal is, fact, an animate device or instrument utilized by another human being. Of course, the animal utilized may, but need not, be under the actual control direction of the 2nd person. As with the first form, given the physical contacts described, no concern exists for excluding "innocent" contacts. The 3rd and final form mirrors the present definition, except one particular. For this alternative, given the physical contacts described, a legitimate concern exists for excluding "innocent" contacts, such as for proper medical purposes or other valid reasons. State v. Keaten, 390 A.2d 1043, 1045 (Me. 1978), State v. Lyons, 466 A.2d 868 (Me. 1983). Hence the contacts described are limited to those done "for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire," or "for the purpose of causing bodily injury or offensive physical contact." The latter purpose is included in present law. It has been added to confront the growing evidence that actors do not necessarily perform such insults for the purpose of giving or deriving sexual pleasure or satisfaction; instead, physical contacts may well be performed for the purpose of causing physical harm to or to degrade the course, as with sexual gratification, victim. Of where it is immaterial as to whether the participants subjectively derived pleasure or satisfaction from the act, it is equally immaterial whether the victim was actually injured or subjectively found the contact to be degrading. The focus is instead on whether these acts were performed by the actor for these purposes. See State v. Alley, 385 A.2d 1175, 1978). Although, under the latter circum-(Me. stances, the conduct would undoubtedly constitute

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assault or aggravated assault against the victim because the physical contacts involve the sex organs or anus, it is deemed appropriate to additionally include it here.

Section 5 amends the definition of "sexual contact" so that it will include digital manipulation or invasion of the anus. This conduct is not uncommon where the victim is a child. It further replaces the word "genitals" with the phrase "sex organs" to conform the terminology used to describe both "sexual act" and "sexual contact." Lastly, the purpose of "causing bodily injury or offensive physical contact" has been added for the reason given for its inclusion relative to "sexual act" described in section 4.

Section 6 provides a definition of "sexual organs."

Section 7 expands upon the types of persons who commit gross sexual misconduct with a person under age 18. This includes persons providing for long-term general care and welfare of minors, as well as service providers and employees of out-of-home educational, treatment, social or recreational facilities which provide care or services for minors.

Section 8 adds a violation under sections 5 and 6 to those which are a Class C crime.

Section 9 increases the penalty for unlawful sexual contact when that contact involves penetration or direct manipulation.

Section 10 is intended to give judges the authority to place a person convicted of a sexual crime against a child on probation so that long-term treatment may be a condition of release. When persons have committed sexual crimes against children, long-term treatment which exceeds 1, 2 or 3 years is often indicated.

Sections 11 to 15 of the bill extend the protection from abuse available to adult household members from other household members to minor children in that household. It also allows an adult responsible for the child or the Department of Human Services to

seek relief on behalf of a child. This protection is necessary to protect children who have been victims of abuse in their homes, so that the alleged perpetrator can be removed from the home rather than the child victim. This prevents further victimization of the child.

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 Section 16 of this bill requires that all child protection proceedings be recorded. With the increasing complexity and gravity of the decisions being made at child protective hearings, a recording of the hearing is essential. Recording is also necessary as a basis for an appeal and to avoid confusion over court orders.

Section 17 of this bill requires disclosure of child protection records to a court where a child protection proceeding is being conducted and the court requests the department to conduct a divorce custody or an adoption study.

Section 18 of this bill repeals the treatment reporting exemption. This has been recommended by the Governor's Working Group on Child Abuse and Neglect, the Department of Human Services and a variety of groups concerned about protecting children.

The intent of this section is to encourage offenders to seek and effectively utilize treatment, at the same time providing any necessary protection and treatment for the child and other family members.

After the investigation, the department may convene a team to make recommendations regarding treatment or prosecution. The team will review the nature, extent and severity of abuse or neglect, the safety of the child and the community, the needs of the child and other family members for treatment and the willingness of the person responsible for the abuse or neglect to engage in treatment.

Members of the team may include a representative of the department, a licensed or certified mental health provider with expertise in child abuse and neglect and a representative of the district attorney's office. The reporter and the person responsible for the abuse may be invited to participate.

The department has had considerable experience in using multi-disciplinary teams to develop coordinated case plans so that the various professionals collectively share the risks in balancing the needs and safety of the child, the community and the alleged offender.

Section 18 also limits information from the reporter under these circumstances to child protection services and any child protection civil proceedings. Perjury by an alleged offender in a civil or criminal proceeding is subject to current statutory sanctions.

Finally, section 18 requires the reporting of child abuse by persons responsible for the child's care. The new provision would make clear to citizens that there is a place to report all suspected abuse of children. In turn, the department would follow its existing policy of reporting suspected crimes to the local district attorney.

Section 19 clarifies that the confidentiality of records of the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation is also abrogated and provides incentive for mental health treatment by preventing the use of statements made to a psychologist or psychiatrist in criminal proceedings, except to rebut possible perjury by the client. This section further clarifies that records passed to the Department of Human Services will be treated confidentially.

Section 20 gives district attorneys the primary authority for the management and prosecution of sexual and physical abuse cases involving children as victims. It assures maximum coordination and swift action on these cases.

In section 21, the confidentiality of mental health records is an important principle protected in Maine law. The right to confidentiality is not absolute and is appropriately abrogated in circumstances involving health and safety. Presently, there exists no specific statutory authority to disclose mental health records in cooperation with child protective activities where issues of the health and safety of children are being addressed. The Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Department

1 Human Services have worked cooperatively to identify 2 those circumstances and conditions where access 3 mental health records and information should be pro-4 vided, while maintaining appropriate standards of confidentiality. Section 22 authorizes disclosure in 5 6 cooperation with an investigation or other child pro-7 activity, encourages interdepartmental cooperation and mandates rulemaking to clarify situations 8 of appropriate disclosure for both child protective 9 workers and mental health providers. 10