

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)



# 117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1995

---

Legislative Document

No. 1471

S.P. 533

In Senate, May 2, 1995

---

**An Act to Protect the Rights of Children Who Have Been Victims of  
Sexual Abuse.**

---

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "May M. Ross".

MAY M. ROSS  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator AMERO of Cumberland.

Cosponsored by Senators: ABROMSON of Cumberland, LONGLEY of Waldo, MILLS of Somerset, PENDEXTER of Cumberland, RAND of Cumberland, Representatives: MARVIN of Cape Elizabeth, RICHARDSON of Portland.

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

4 **PART A**

6 **Sec. A-1. 17-A MRSA §254-A** is enacted to read:

8 **§254-A. Written notification not to pursue charges for sexual  
abuse of a minor**

10 A prosecutor who elects not to commence a criminal  
12 proceeding for an alleged offense of sexual abuse of a minor  
14 shall inform, in writing, the parent, surrogate parent or  
guardian of the alleged victim of the reason for not commencing  
the proceeding.

16 **PART B**

18 **Sec. B-1. Working group convened; sexual abuse of a minor.** The  
20 Department of Human Services and the Department of the Attorney  
22 General, within existing resources, are directed to convene a  
24 work group and, in consultation with district attorneys and law  
26 enforcement investigators, shall examine the legal rights of  
28 children who testify in cases in which they have been the alleged  
victims of sexual abuse. The work group shall also review the  
State's current investigative and courtroom procedures for cases  
of sexual abuse of minors and make recommendations that would  
improve the quality of investigations and modify conventional  
procedures that seem stressful to children. In conducting the  
review, the work group shall:

30 1. Review other states' laws regarding issues concerning  
32 child sexual abuse;

34 2. Explore the use of a multidisciplinary team of  
36 professionals to provide consistency throughout each case of  
child sexual abuse;

38 3. Propose ways to improve the setting in which children  
40 are interviewed and provide alternatives to the testimony of a  
child in an open courtroom;

42 4. Assess the qualifications of individuals who currently  
44 conduct interviews with children and, if necessary, develop  
specialized training to enhance interviewing skills;

46 5. Explore the feasibility of having one interviewer  
48 selected jointly by the prosecution and the defense to conduct  
all interviews required of a child in a child sexual abuse case;

50 6. Explore the use of 2-way mirrors, videotaping or joint  
52 interviews to reduce the number and enhance the quality of  
interviews; and

