

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
BILL SUMMARIES
JUNE 1984

This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature, covering the Second Regular Session of the 111th Legislature. The summaries are arranged alphabetically, and indexed separately by committee.

LD TITLE

SPONSOR

DISPOSITION

It establishes for the first time a purposes section to the Revised Statutes, chapter 1071, subchapter VI, dealing with termination of parental rights. The purpose of this section is to stress the movement toward freeing children for adoption as soon as it is clear that the children will not be able to return to their parents. The section further indicates that the subchapter on termination of parental rights should be liberally construed to serve and protect the best interests of the children involved.

It provides for an expedited appeal for orders terminating parental rights in order to shorten the approximately two year process for appeals for children who have been freed for adoption through termination proceedings.

It provides for application of the provisions of the Interstate Compact on Placement of Children and admissability of Compact reports in evidence.

It specifies parental responsibilities for rehabilitation and reunification. The intent is to firmly establish that the parents of any child placed in the custody of the Department of Human Services have a responsibility for making good faith efforts to rehabilitate themselves and reunify their family. It also clarifies the department's responsibilities in working with the parents to assist them in rehabilitation and reunification, as well as the conditions under which the department may discontinue its efforts to rehabilitate and reunify the parents.

It amends the standard for termination fo parental rights as follows:

1. It brings best interest of the child forward as the first consideration the court must make.
2. It further requires a finding that either:
 - (i) The parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child from jeopardy and these circumstances are unlikely to change within a time which is reasonably calculated to meet the child's needs;
 - (ii) The parent has been unwilling or unable to take responsibility for the child within a time which is reasonably calculated to meet the child's needs;
 - (iii) The child has been abandoned; or
 - (iv) The parent has failed to make a good faith effort to rehabilitate and reunify with the child.

2185 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS Brannigan
REGARDING BAIL

Replaced by new draft LD 2439