

SUMMARY of LD 1020:

An Act To End Discrimination in Civil Marriage and Affirm Religious Freedom

This bill repeals the provision that limits marriage to one man and one woman and replaces it with the authorization for marriage between any 2 persons that meet the other requirements of Maine law. It also specifies that a marriage between 2 people of the same sex in another state that is valid in that state is valid and must be recognized in this State.

This bill also clarifies that the authorization of marriage between 2 people of the same sex does not compel any religious institution to alter its doctrine, policy or teaching regarding marriage or to solemnize any marriage in conflict with that doctrine, policy or teaching. It also specifies that a person authorized to join persons in marriage and who fails or refuses to join persons in marriage is not subject to any fine or other penalty for such failure or refusal.

Summary of LD 1020 Bill Text:

A. Codification of marriages

“Marriage is the legally recognized union of 2 people. Gender-specific terms relating to the marital relationship or familial relationships, including, but not limited to, "spouse," "family," "marriage," "immediate family," "dependent," "next of kin," "bride," "groom," "husband," "wife," "widow" and "widower," must be construed to be gender-neutral for all purposes throughout the law...”

B. Recognition of marriage licensed and certified in another jurisdiction

A marriage of a same-sex couple that is validly licensed and certified in another jurisdiction is recognized for all purposes under the laws of this State.

3. Affirmation of religious freedom

This Part does not authorize any court or other state or local governmental body, entity, agency or commission to compel, prevent or interfere in any way with any religious institution's religious doctrine, policy, teaching or solemnization of marriage within that particular religious faith's tradition as guaranteed by the Maine Constitution, Article 1, Section 3 or the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

A person authorized to join persons in marriage and who fails or refuses to join persons in marriage is not subject to any fine or other penalty for such failure or refusal.