

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1711

TITLE: An Act relative to child custody when either parent is on active military duty

SPONSOR: Rep. Colleen M. Garry

CO-SPONSOR: None

HEARING DATE: April 22, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1506 (2023-2024) H797 (2017-2018)
H1594 (2021-2022) H1318 (2015-2016)
H1419 (2019-2020)

SENATE BILL: None

CURRENT LAW: General Law c. 208 § 31A establishes the conditions and standards of abuse that the court can find in order to restrict, manage, or eliminate custody and parenting orders. There are consequences for custody should a parent be found to have abused their child.

General Law c. 209C s. 11 governs how and when a father may voluntarily acknowledge parentage of a child born out of wedlock. There is a 60-day restriction on rescinding the acknowledgement.

BILL SUMMARY: Sections 1 and 2 add an express requirement to c. 208 § 31A and c. 209C s. 11, respectively, that a party's absence, relocation or failure to comply with custody and parenting orders shall not be considered when determining whether to modify a custody or parenting order if the reason is due to the party's activation to military duty or temporary duty, mobilization in support of combat or other military operation, or military deployment out of state.