

## **BILL SUMMARY**

There are many paths to parenthood and many types of families in the Commonwealth, but Massachusetts statutes have not kept pace with modern science and the diversity of our families, leaving children vulnerable.

The Massachusetts Parentage Act (“MPA”) updates Massachusetts statutes to clarify who can be a parent and how to establish parentage. This bill is critical to ensuring that all children can access the security of legal parentage, regardless of the circumstances of their birth.

This bill is based on the Uniform Parentage Act (UPA), which serves as a uniform framework for ensuring the protection of the relationship between parents and children. Originally passed in 1973 to protect children born to unmarried people, the UPA was most recently revised and approved in 2017. Several of our neighboring states, including Vermont and Maine, have passed similar parentage legislation.

## **PATHS TO PARENTAGE UNDER THE MPA**

- The MPA provides a path to parentage through birth, adoption, acknowledgment, adjudication, genetics, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, de facto parentage, and presumptions (including a marital presumption).
- The MPA provides clear standards for family courts to apply in order to establish parentage.

## **KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MPA**

- Ensures that children born through assisted reproduction technology (such as in vitro fertilization) have a clear route to establish their parentage.
- Provides clear standards for establishing parentage through surrogacy.
- Ensures equality for LGBTQ families so they can establish their parentage like other families, including through a voluntary acknowledgement of parentage
- Provides a clear standard for courts to resolve competing claims of parentage
- Codifies parentage precedents from the Supreme Judicial Court
- Ensures greater efficiency and consistency in our courts and reduces unnecessary litigation

### **As of January 2019, the MA Parentage Act is supported by:**

Circle Surrogacy; LGBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD); Kauffman Law & Mediation; Modern Family Law; New England Surrogacy; Nichols, DeLisle & Lightholder; Out MetroWest; and RESOLVE New England.

### **If you wish to support the MA Parentage Act or have any questions, contact:**

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