



## **Massachusetts Senate Bill 2294 Sample Support Letter**

**Sample Subject:** Protect Against Child Marriage: Pass Senate Bill 2294

### **Sample Text:**

I am writing to urge you support Senate Bill 2294 to help end child marriage in Massachusetts. S.2294 eliminates exceptions to the marriage age, and reserves marriage, a serious legal contract, for those who have reached the age of majority.

While the current minimum marriage age in Massachusetts is 18, the state allows for two major exceptions: (1) children ages 16 and 17 can marry with parental consent, and (2) children aged 15 or younger can marry with judicial approval. There is currently no minimum age below which a judge can no longer approve a marriage, nor are there any criteria that a marriage involving a minor below the age of 15 must meet to be eligible for judicial approval. In cases in which minors over the age of 15 request a marriage license, there is no mechanism in place to ensure that the required parental consent is not in fact parental coercion.

Child marriage severely limits opportunities to health, education, and economic freedom. It also increases risk of domestic violence.

I therefore urge you to support and pass S.2294 and protect all minors from child marriage in Massachusetts. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.