

Testimony of Joyce A Maker before the Joint Standing Committee on
Education and Cultural Affairs
April 3, 2023

In Opposition to LD 51, An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions to Immunization Requirements, LD 1098, An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions Regarding Immunization Requirements, and LD 1209, An Act to Reinstate the Religious and Philosophical Vaccine Exemptions for Private Schools and Virtual Public Charter Schools

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and honorable members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee . I am Joyce A. Maker from Calais, Maine. I am here to speak in opposition of LD 51, LD 1098 and LD 1209.

On March 3, 2020, the people of Maine spoke about this matter and they overwhelmingly said they only wanted Medical Exemption to the Immunization process. The election results were 72.81%- 281,750 - No to 27.19 %105,214 Yes. This is an insult to Maine Residents to bring this before the Maine Legislature to allow their members make a change. Although I am not supportive of another referendum, because it creates hate and discontent, if there are individuals not satisfied with the past referendum then they should follow that process.

This law protects all of our children. As a prior member of your Committee, I heard many that use exemptions just because. One in particular use it because she didn't want to go back home to pick the record up not necessarily oppose to it because they had vaccinated their child. The exemptions were abused in the past and the only true one is the Medical Exemption which is needed to protect the child. The other exemptions only put the remainder of children in danger and society as a whole. It is also the only way to know how many of our children are vaccinated in the State.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports outbreaks around the world and provides health information for travel to more than 200 international destinations. (cdc.gov) From mumps, to pertussis to the measles, diseases once thought to be eradicated are coming back because people are not being vaccinated as they once were. We cannot go back. I am sure that you will hear this a lot today but I witnessed polio and have recent articles of its return. On July 21, 2022: CDC is aware of a case of polio in an unvaccinated individual from Rockland County, New York.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on such a serious matter. Please vote ought not to pass on all these bills.

Sincerely,



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