

**Testimony of Peter P. Michaud, JD, RN
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 Exemptions for Private Schools and Virtual Public Charter Schools.

**Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
Cross State Office Building Room 208
April 3, 2023**

Good morning Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Peter P. Michaud. I am a retired Registered Nurse and attorney and am a resident of Readfield, in Kennebec County. Please accept my testimony in opposition to the various vaccine bills noted above.

These three bills, LD 51, LD 1098, and LD 1209, all seek to do the same thing: to reverse the actions of the 129th Maine Legislature and the voters of Maine in the 2020 referendum. The issues involved in these matters were thoroughly, one might even say exhaustively, discussed and reviewed in that earlier legislative session and in the campaign leading to the action of Maine voters on March 3, 2020. Thus there is no need for me to repeat the analysis of those issues.

There is something even more significant at stake here. These bills seek to overturn, and thus to nullify, the votes of Maine citizens who voted in the 2020 referendum. Over 386,000 votes were cast. Over 386,000 Mainers exercised their right to vote in that referendum. 73% of those voters voted to uphold the 129th Legislature's action. Only 23% of the voters sought to reverse the Legislature's action. Since that referendum occurred on the same date as both Republican and Democratic presidential primary elections that year, there were multiple motivations for Maine citizens to participate. The referendum was defeated, and the action of the Legislature upheld, in every one of Maine's 16 counties.

A referendum vote of 73% to 27% can only be characterized as “overwhelming”. How can any legislator believe it is his or her role to attempt to nullify such an overwhelming vote by Maine citizens, including so many of each Senator's and Representative's own constituents? This attempt is simply wrong. That is not how our Constitutional system of government works.

On behalf of that 73% of Maine voters, and all who believe that the votes of all Maine citizens should count, I ask you to vote “Ought Not To Pass” on LD 51, LD 1098, and LD 1209.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter P. Michaud, JD, RN
Readfield, Maine