

Kevin Palmer
Saco
LD 51

Dear Respective Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am writing to submit a public testimony in support of LD 51: An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions to Immunization Requirements. Forcing anyone to have to choose between their job or education and their religion is morally wrong and potentially catastrophic to their livelihood. It is truly the antithesis of the Free Exercise Clause under the First Amendment.

As someone who has needed medication, surgery and treatment for survival it was even more insulting that the religious exemption was not allowed in 2021. I have had heart and brain surgery and there I was, without a job, because of my own personal decision not to get an experimental vaccine, for a virus that was quite mild compared to what I've already overcome, by the grace of God.

Maine is one of very few states in the country that has not allowed religious exemptions in recent years. That's what's even more astounding. It should not be up to the state when it comes to a person's philosophical or religious beliefs. Please restore these exemptions for the great people of this beautiful state.

Thank you,

Kevin Palmer