

## TESTIMONY REGARDING

### L.D. 1098—AN ACT TO RESTORE RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL EXEMPTIONS REGARDING IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

### L.D. 1209—AN ACT TO REINSTATE THE RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL VACCINE EXEMPTIONS FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND VIRTUAL PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

### L.D. 51—AN ACT TO RESTORE RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL EXEMPTIONS TO IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Eileen King, deputy executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association regarding L.D. 1098, L.D. 1209, and L.D. 51. Both committees were opposed to L.D. 1098 and L.D. 51; MSBA was opposed to L.D. 1209 and MSSA was neither for nor against.

Superintendents are charged with overseeing the operations of our school districts and our first obligation is to keep students safe. One way we do that is to enforce vaccination requirements, and the law requires us to do that.

Title 20-A, Section 6359 states:

Enrollment of school: No chief administrative officer may permit any student to be enrolled in or attend school without a certificate of immunization for each disease or other acceptable evidence of required immunization or immunity against the disease except as follows: The parent or the student provided a written statement from a licensed physician, nurse, nurse practitioner's or physician assistant that in their professional judgement, immunization against one or more of the disease may be medically inadvisable.

The law underscores that student safety is paramount in our obligation as school leaders, and we believe the exemptions to the rules being considered today prevent us from fulfilling that obligation and would put students at risk.