

Hello Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Committee On Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Shea Donovan, and I live in Lewiston. I'm a student, a doula, and a postpartum birth worker. I have worked extremely closely with parents and children in Maine for the past 10 years.

I'm here today to support LD 51.

Parents are the only ones who should be in control of their children's health. Parents are the only ones who should have the right to choose which pharmaceuticals do or do not go into their children's bodies. No child should be discriminated against and denied access to public facilities paid for by their parents' tax dollars just because they haven't consumed certain pharmaceuticals. Denying youth public opportunities potentially puts a child at a disadvantage against their peers and could limit their future success. We should be nurturing our children, not limiting them.

The argument that is often given for vaccine mandates is that you have a moral or ethical obligation to do so for the sake of public health. The problem with that is that the scientific consensus is divided on what constitutes the best approach to public health. To declare one set of scientists right and silence or ignore another set is anti-scientific by nature. It goes against the core of good science: scientific discourse. The government is too bulky and out of touch to keep up with such nuanced and evolving topics. It is the responsibility of parents to make these decisions for their children.

Mandatory vaccination amounts to discrimination against healthy innate biological characteristics, which is unethical. VAERS, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System in the US currently lists well over a million adverse events due to various vaccines. People should have the right to choose between a potentially dangerous pharmaceutical approach to health or a holistic approach to health.

Please do what's right and pass LD 51.

Thank you,

Shea Donovan