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Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am in strong opposition to both LD 174 (An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements) and LD 727 (An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools).

As a school nurse for 6 years, one of my primary responsibilities is to monitor the vaccination status of students. I take great pride in saying that almost every student in my district is in compliance with the current immunization requirements. Prior to our current immunization law, more than 10% of students were not fully vaccinated, which is below the level to provide herd immunity against many diseases. Vaccination rates improved considerably after the law passed and was implemented in 2021. In 2024 the vaccination rate of Maine school children was 95%- one of the highest in the country.

Measles is on the rise in our country, with an outbreak reported in 20 states. Maine should never go backward on vaccination requirements as it is not in the best interest of the health of our students, staff, and communities.

I strongly oppose LD 174 and LD 727.