

Elizabeth Randall
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LD 174

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, As a retired physician, I am in strong opposition to both LD 174 LD (An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements) and LD 727 (An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Prior to our current immunization law, more than 10% of students were not fully vaccinated - below the level to provide herd immunity against many diseases, diseases like polio and measles and rubella which can cause death and permanent disability. Many in my generation suffered before we had vaccines. I remember to this day the fear we children had about getting polio and how happy we were lining up in the gym for our sugar cubes with the pink liquid. I fully support the law that eliminated religious and personal exemptions. A public referendum was overwhelmingly defeated by 72% of voters to uphold the law. Mainers stand by this law in huge numbers. In 2021, the law was finally implemented and vaccination rates improved. In 2024, the vaccination rate of Maine school children was 95% - one of the highest in the country, an impressive achievement directly related to the law. Currently we have a measles outbreak in 20 states in our country. Maine children will be more protected thank goodness. Going backward on school vaccination requirements is not in the best interest of the health of our students and communities. For these reasons, I oppose LD 174 and LD 727.