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Dear Members,

My name is Heather and I am writing in strong support of keeping the state immunization requirements for school intact. As a parent, I believe that not keeping this mandate would be detrimental to the health of Maine's children. As we have recently seen with the outbreak of measles in the United States, I would hate to see what our state would look like if we did not have the mandate in place. I don't believe it should be personal choice due to the unlimited access of misinformation out on the innerweb being shared as "truth" and parents basing their decisions to not vaccinate their children on this.

As of today there are only 4 vaccines that are required for attending school. I feel like this is a very lean list and should not be cut anymore but have more added to them. We have a lot of these illnesses eradicated due to herd immunity and eliminating school requirements for vaccines will be put this in jeopardy.

I urge all member of the legislature to consider not passing this bill. There has already been 1 death this flu season of a pediatric patient due to influenza. If this child had the influenza vaccine, this may have lessened their symptoms and may have saved their life. This is the same scenario that played out in Texas of the pediatric patient that died due to measles. If this child was vaccinated this may have helped lessen their symptoms and saved their life. I urge you to consider these children's lives when voting.

Thank you.