

JANET RIVARD
Brunswick
LD 174

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

I am writing in strong opposition to both LD 174 (An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements) and LD727 (An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools).

As a Nationally Certified School Nurse with over 20 years of experience in School Health I know that proven public health initiatives have a direct impact on the ability for children to access their education. If a vaccine preventable disease is in the school, those who are not vaccinated or under vaccinated will miss school and children who attend school with medically fragile conditions will be at risk. We all know the impact missing school has on the mental health of our students as has been evident in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic.

The vaccines required by the State of Maine for School attendance are required because they are commonsense protection against illnesses that can have severe consequences to the quality of human life. Any changes made to weaken the law currently in place is a threat to the health of our students and our communities.

Sincerely,

Janet Rivard, BS, RN, NCSN