

To: Education and Cultural Affairs Committee

RE: Testimony in opposition to LD 174 and LD 727

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Education and Cultural Affairs Committee Members:

I am writing to tell you why I urge you to vote against passage of LD 174 and LD 727,

I am a now retired pediatrician with over 35 years of experience. I practiced for many years before vaccines were available for Hemophilus Influenza and Pneumococcus. The frequency and severity of these diseases prior to immunizations are a stark warning of the risks associated with vaccine delay and refusal.

I vividly remember a previously healthy girl of 12 years with pneumococcal meningitis who required a ventilator to survive, and who was left with intellectual disability as a result. Infants, with their very small airways are particularly susceptible to respiratory distress with Pertussis, also known as whooping cough. I recall one little 3 month old boy with pertussis in the ER struggling desperately to breath; he required immediate intubation and transport to a pediatric ICU.

To protect the health and well being of Maine people from these life-threatening diseases, unwavering vaccine requirements are necessary. In this way herd immunity can protect Immunocompromised individuals, and those with cancer who cannot receive vaccines. I urge you to fulfill your obligation to the health of all Maine people.

Thank you for consideration of this testimony and for your hard work for the people of Maine.

Yours truly,

Iris Silverstein, MD, Fellow American Academy of Pediatrics  
Topsham, ME