

April 4, 2025

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

I oppose **LD 174** (*An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements*) and **LD 727** (*An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools*). These bills will weaken Maine's school immunization laws and pose increased risks to the health of Maine's communities.

As a nurse serving our public schools, I have dedicated myself to caring for our youngest and most vulnerable population. Immunizations are crucial to children's health, protecting them from preventable and debilitating diseases. One of my primary duties is monitoring the immunization status of students in my school. In our district, we have a significant population of newly arrived immigrants who escaped untold strife and risked their lives to seek refuge in our country. Many are in the process of receiving their vaccinations, and are as such unprotected from illness.

As of March 27, 2025, jurisdictions in 20 states have reported confirmed cases of measles; 75% of those 483 cases have affected unvaccinated children under the age of 19. Measles, a vaccine-preventable infectious disease, is extremely contagious and cases multiply rapidly in outbreak areas. We cannot risk the health of our students and communities by repealing Maine immunization laws.

I urge you to vote against **LD 174** and **LD 727** (which is exceptionally vague) to protect the health and well-being of all Mainers.

Thank you,

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