

Toni Bashinsky  
Topsham  
LD 174

Good morning to all Representatives and Senators occupying seats within the Education and Cultural affairs committee,

My name is Toni Bashinsky and I reside in Topsham. I am writing testimony regarding LD174 and my support for the amendment to restore the religious exemption to LD798 which removed both philosophical and religious exemptions in 2020.

There's probably not much else to say beyond what's been said thus far regarding the removal of philosophical and religious rights to immunization for daycare and schools within this state, but I want to show my support for this amendment anyway. Too many children have been disenfranchised by the removal of these exemptions and therefore I support the reinstatement of them. Inability to obtain a fair and equal education through the state hurts our children, causes undue stress for families, and frankly, is discriminatory. We cannot call ourselves the land of the free and home of the brave and then cast children aside based upon medical decisions made by families and their medical providers that I PROMISE are not made lightly. Just look at the enforcement of the COVID vaccine and how mandating it backfired and caused an onslaught of issues within our state and around the nation. We are better than this! Our state must do better for our children. I am asking that this amendment is voted as ought to pass so that some relief can be brought to families wishing to have their children return to private and public education so that they can receive the education they have a right to receive.

Thank you for your time,  
Toni Bashinsky  
Topsham resident