

Kathy Strand
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LD 727

I urge all members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee to vote NOT OUGHT TO PASS on LD 727 that would eliminate vaccine requirements for our schools. The effectiveness of the State's current vaccination requirements which went into effect in 2019 through significant bipartisan support (and was overwhelmingly endorsed at the ballot box in 2020), is extraordinarily clear. Since then, our rates of non-medical exemptions have dropped dramatically, from 6.2% in 2019 to 0.0% today. This means that more children are protected, and more schools are safer from outbreaks.

Worth adding on a personal level – this also means that senior citizens residing in Maine are also safer given that any outbreaks of childhood diseases such as measles can and do spread to people who had their childhood vaccines decades earlier. We have reached what is considered “herd immunity.” This level of public health should be protected by ensuring our current vaccination policies remain intact and most definitely remain intact at a time when public health infrastructure is being underfunded and stretched thin.