

To who it may concern:

I am Dr. Yorgo Zahlanie, a Pediatric Infectious Diseases physician at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor ME. I am writing this statement to advocate for not allowing non-medical vaccine exemptions in children at Maine schools.

I have had several discussions with the more senior physicians who used to work when some of the vaccines nowadays were not available. These physicians remember how they used to see measles and Hemophilus influenzae type B, which have been reduced significantly due to immunizing children. During my medical training and in my current job, I have encountered patients with vaccine-preventable infectious diseases. Some of these patients were quite ill and had to be hospitalized in intensive care units.

As a Pediatric Infectious Diseases specialist, I am extremely worried about allowing non-medical vaccine exemptions in children at Maine schools. If this is permitted, a lot of children will acquire infections that were once terminated. This is not limited to unimmunized children and will also affect their classmates who are either fully immunized or still getting their vaccines. In addition to putting threat on our children's health, their parents will have to call out from work and stay home with their kids. This will negatively impact the economy. I am also concerned that the healthcare system in Maine will get more overwhelmed.

I am certain this statement will be received by the people who will make sure that the children at Maine schools are healthy and safe. Feel free please to contact me by email yzahlanie@northernlight.org or via cell phone (347) 276-3207 for any questions.

Sincerely,

Yorgo Zahlanie, MD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Y. Zahlanie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

4/3/2025