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I am writing in strong support of both [LD 174](#) (An Act to Restore Religious Exemptions to Immunization Requirements) and [LD 727](#) (An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools).

I have been a registered nurse for 9 years, and at the start of my nursing career was in full support of vaccinations and the childhood immunization schedule. I started working as a school nurse in 2019 and had (and still do have) a direct role in keeping track of children's immunizations records as they entered or move through the public school system. My previous viewpoint was that vaccinating your children was common sense, and most children should be following the Center for Disease Control recommended immunization schedule. This was before I ever did any research of my own on the topic. In nursing school, we were never taught about the true history of vaccines or the diseases that they "protect" us against, the ingredients they are used to create the vaccines, or the true potential side effects of these vaccines. For example, you will find that most of these vaccines have never been tested for carcinogenic or mutagenic potential or impairment of fertility. I will not get into the many other debilitating potential side effects, but this alone is extremely concerning. My children's doctor also never gave me true informed consent about the potential side effects of these immunizations. I blindly trusted that these vaccines were safe and even proceeded with having my first two children fully vaccinated. I have now taken the time to really research these vaccinations and have made the educated decision to forgo these vaccines for my two youngest children. While I do believe there are scenarios where children with health conditions would benefit from these vaccinations, I do not feel that the risk is worth taking for the average healthy child. Ultimately, I strongly feel that this is a parent right to look at their own individual situation and make the choice that they feel is right for their child. I am currently in the predicament of having to work a full-time job and potentially having to find alternative schooling for my unvaccinated children when they reach school age. It is extremely frustrating that we are being forced to vaccinate our children for them to attend public school, without any documented evidence that these immunizations are making our children healthier or our schools safer. It is easy to see that our nation's children are getting sicker, with chronic health conditions, autoimmune disorders, and childhood cancers skyrocketing, and many of these conditions correlating to the increase in immunizations recommended on the CDC immunization schedule. I am not asking anyone to share the same opinions as I about this topic. I am simply asking that parents have the choice to make a decision that feels the safest and most appropriate for their family, without the pressure of it determining their education path as well.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my testimony. I hope that you pass both of LD 174 and LD 727 and are able come to a solution that allows all Maine families access to public school regardless of their medical choices.