

Eileen McCue
Belfast
LD 217

I am in strong support of LD 217, An Act to Require Schools to Provide Access to Free Condoms for Students in Grades 9 to 12 in the School Nurse's Office. As a parent of two girls about to enter this demographic (ages 11 and 13), it feels important for them to be able to access this resource in a place where they spend so much of their time, a place that is a resource in so many other ways.

I value the relationship that I have built with my girls, there is trust and openness, but I know that teenagers need additional trusted sources of information and resources. As a parent, I want them to know that they have other people and resources that they can count on.

We know teenagers are having sex, whether we adults believe they are ready or not. This feels like an important, impactful and relatively easy way to support our young people in making healthy and safe choices. Knowing that for a high school student, barriers to access make such a difference in this important health choice, I think it is the responsible choice to offer access to condoms in all Maine high schools.

I support LD 217, and also request that committee members amend the bill to make it more equitable and impactful by changing the language to say that condoms can be accessed in the school nurse's office "or locations authorized by the school nurse." I know even my kiddos are sometimes reluctant to go to the nurse's office and it would be of great benefit to have the flexibility for condoms to be available in other places in the school. I urge the Committee to vote YES on LD 217.