

Molly McLaughlin
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LD 1688

Greetings, honorable members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee: My name is Molly Gray McLaughlin. I live in South Portland. I support LD 1688 and hope you will, too. We have no Public Health system, personal protection like masking has been politicized, and I have spent the last five years in the worst mental and physical health of my life. I lost my community, connections and normalcy trying to diagnose and treat what turned out to be a second autoimmune disease while doing my best to prevent additional disability. I was turned away from CVS for a 6-month Covid booster for not being over 65. They said I needed a prescription. My nurse practitioner at the time refused. She said my immune system is absolutely fine to fight infections like Covid. A school and hospice nurse told me masking is bad for my health, it's "not healthy to breathe all that carbon dioxide" and I look "crazy" wearing a mask. Time and research findings are showing otherwise and thankfully I have continued masking. We all have "Covid PTSD" to a certain extent in my opinion. We live out the results through many different beliefs that affect behaviors. One of these behaviors is ongoing, denial / refusal to admit the ongoing and mounting harm of the pandemic. Immune systems can't keep up with repeated infections and western medical providers are not prepared to recognize, understand, treat and refer people with these complications. It has long been known that infections can cause disease. Human papillomavirus infection (HPV) causes cervical cancer. Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) causes mono, spleen and liver complications, and potentially years of reoccurring symptoms among other things. Research is starting to show a connection between infections and Alzheimer's. Covid is causing a host of multi systemic diseases in even the youngest, previously healthiest patients. Providers need to know how the infections of today are causing the symptoms and new diagnoses of tomorrow. Our lives and futures literally depend on it. Please vote for this bill. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Molly