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# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 3, 2023

***Testimony of Rep. Anne Graham against  
LD's 51 1098 and 1209***

***Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs***

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and my esteemed colleagues for the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Rep Anne Graham and I serve the people of North Yarmouth and Gray. I am here to testify against LD 51, LD 1098 and LD 1209. I am also against LD 869, LD 1148 and LD 1228.

I believe that prevention works. I have committed my entire professional life to preventing diseases that kill children as a public health nurse and a pediatric nurse practitioner and, yes, as a legislator. I would be violating my oath to care for patients if I did not support vaccinating our children to prevent life threatening illnesses. That is why I stand in strong opposition to all of these anti-vaccine bills.

I was a young pediatric nurse practitioner working in Boston in 1986 when I cared for a little 3 year old girl, I will call Amy. She had Haemophilus Influenzae meningitis known as H Flu meningitis. Amy was severely ill and there were no effective treatments for her disease. Amy survived but she was left deaf. Unfortunately for my young patient, the first Hib conjugate vaccine was licensed in 1987<sup>1</sup>. In unimmunized populations, Hib has been the most important cause of meningitis in children younger than 5 years<sup>2</sup>. I prefer to prevent meningitis with a vaccine than watch a child die or live with a lifelong disability.

Do you know anyone who has had polio? I did. My college friend, Jeannie's Dad, had polio and walked with bilateral canes. He worked at Boston College as an administrator. He was the father of seven children and many grandchildren. We lost him several months after a long painful journey. Your parents or grandparents may remember the ravages of polio. They can remember that polio causes severe disease and death. We are the victims of our own success because we have forgotten.

Vaccines work! From the World Health Organization, (4 July 2022) cases due to wild poliovirus have decreased by over 99% since 1988, from an estimated 350,000 cases then, to six reported cases in 2021. Almost 20 million people are able to walk today who would otherwise have been paralyzed. An estimated 1.5 million childhood deaths have been prevented<sup>3</sup>.

It is time to remember. It is time to protect our children from illnesses that could kill them. It is time to protect individuals who are immunosuppressed or battle cancer. It is time to remember that vaccines prevent illnesses that harm and kill children and adults. Please vote Ought Not to Pass on all of these anti-vaccine bills.

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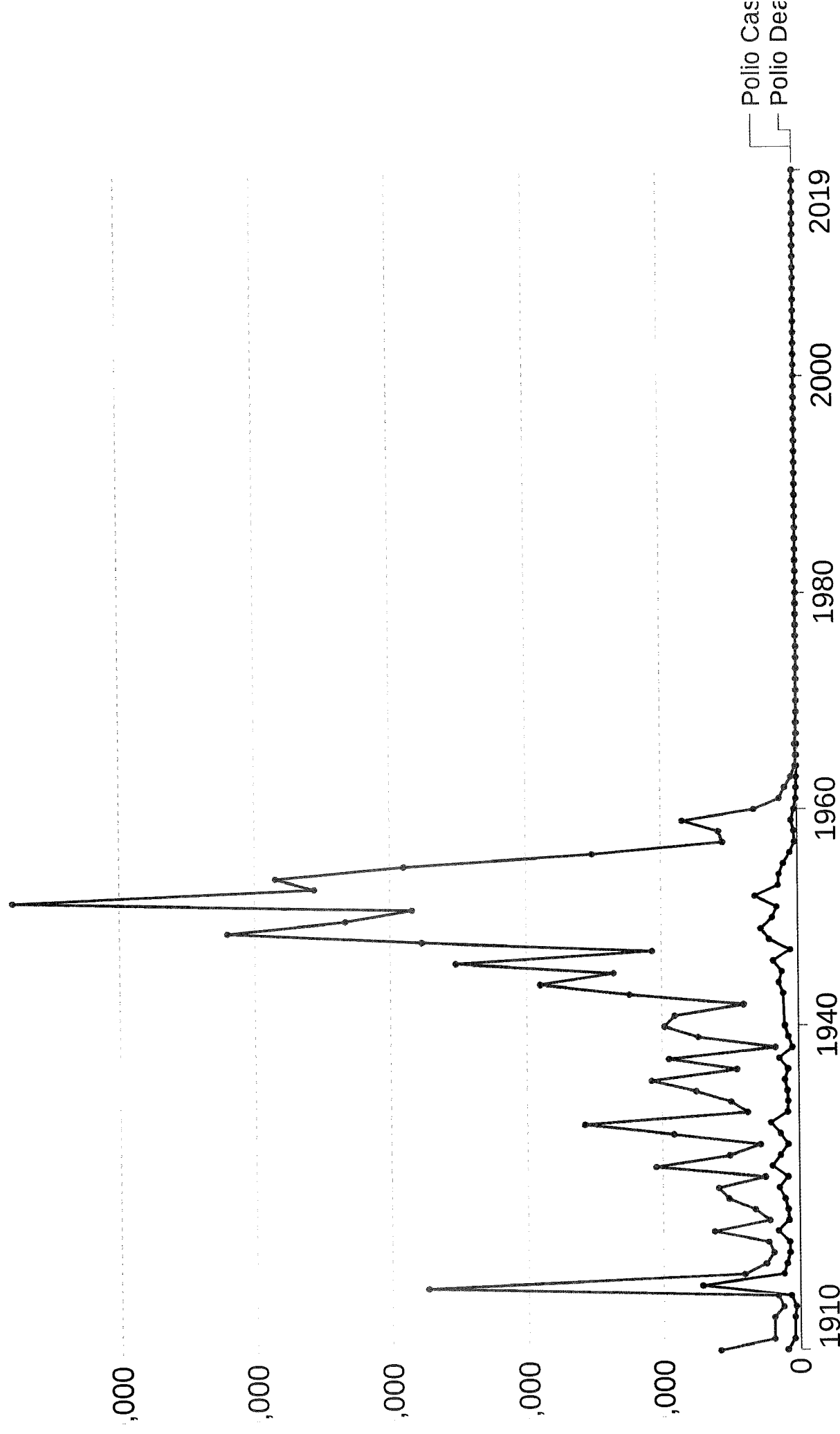
<sup>1</sup> Pinkbook: Haemophilus influenzae (Hib) | CDC

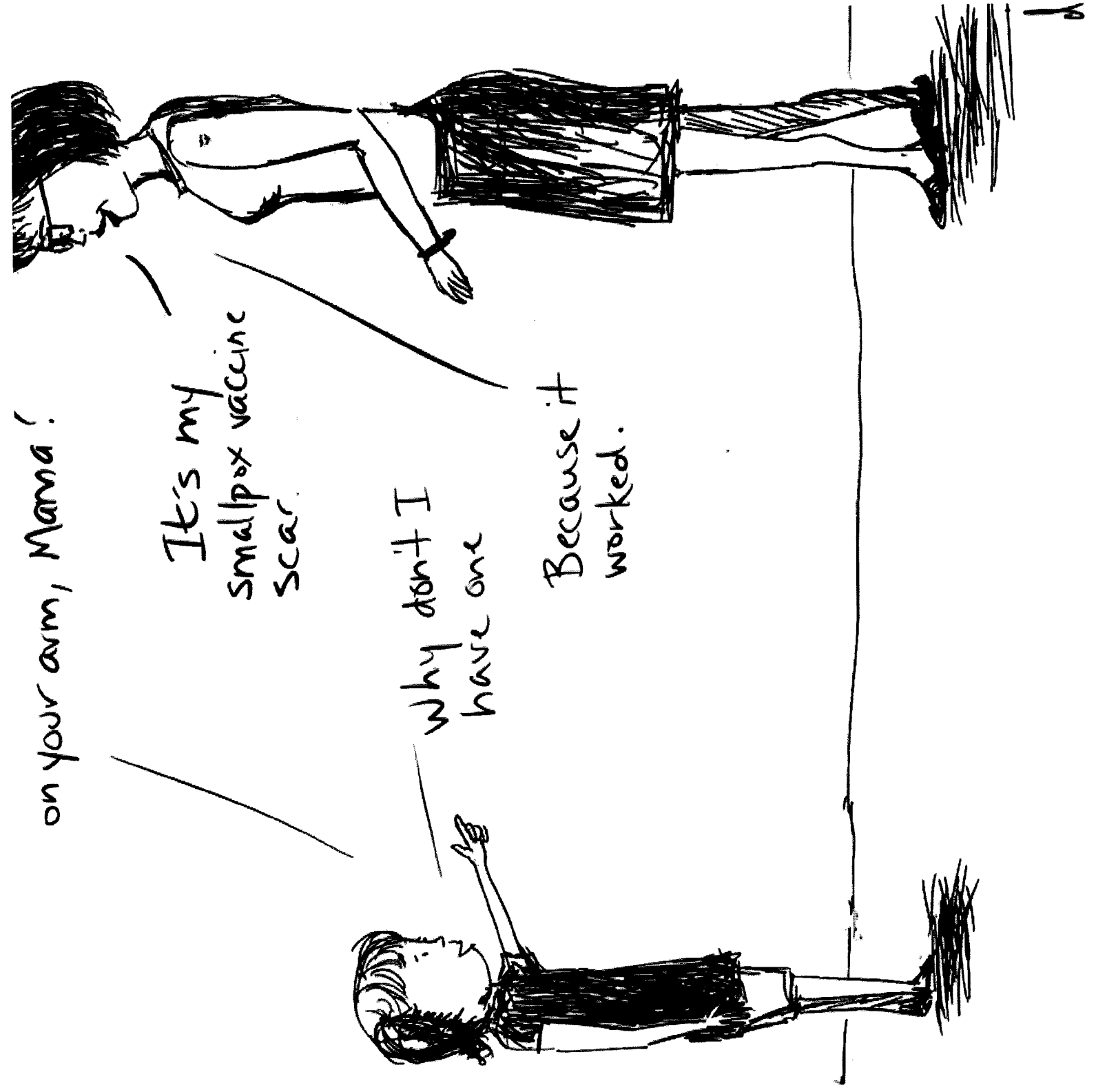
<sup>2</sup> Haemophilus Meningitis: Background, Pathophysiology, Etiology (medscape.com)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/poliomyelitis>

ported paralytic polio cases and deaths, United States, 1910 to 2019

e reported figures include both wild- and vaccine-derived type polio infections that occurred indigenously and as  
 orted cases.





on your arm, Mama;

It's my  
smallpox vaccine  
scar.

Why don't I  
have one

Because it  
worked.