

My name is Amy Savage and I live in Dennysville, Maine. I am giving a testimony in favor of LD 51.

I have been an ambulance attendant with the Dennys River Ambulance for about thirty years. However, since COVID mandates have been in place in the state of Maine, I have not been able to go on any ambulance runs. I have had COVID, and my blood tests have shown that I have active natural immunity. My doctor strongly suggested that, with my family's history of autoimmune disorders, I should not get a COVID vaccination. Since my father died of pulmonary fibrosis, which is a 100% terminally fatal disease that he got from a common medication, I've chosen to heed my caregiver's advice.

However, I've had to make a difficult decision. Our ambulance crew is very short of EMTs to cover our area -- sometimes we don't have the necessary crew because, being a totally volunteer department, most of our attendants have regular jobs in addition to being with the ambulance. At this point, we have fewer than half a dozen EMTs to cover two towns and also unorganized territory. Every attendant is crucial.

*yet my ambulance service will lose their licenses if I'm allowed to go on a run*  
My doctor and I discussed the possibility for her to try to request a medical exemption for me, but the political atmosphere at the time made it hard for her not to feel some intimidation with the process.

This experience has left me with a renewed appreciation for the religious and philosophical exemptions to vaccination requirements. Christians (together with other religious people) believe that, as God's creation, we are responsible to God to take the best care of our bodies that is possible for us to do. Part of that process is to be informed and to make the best choices for our own health, including what we choose to inject into our body. Being a Christian myself, I accept the fact that I am ultimately responsible to the Lord God for how I care for my own body. That responsibility does not belong to the government or even to my doctor.

Persons requesting a religious or philosophical exemption for themselves or for their family should not do so without considering all the circumstances and relevant facts. By doing this in my own situation, I hope that I can look forward to again serving my community as I had for thirty exciting years with the Dennys River Ambulance!