

Sen. Rafarty, Rep. Brennan, and Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee.

My name is Silas Schrader, and I am from Pembroke, Maine.

I am testifying in support of LD51. Since LD798 was passed, my brother, who was attending the University of Maine in Orono at the time, was suddenly unable to finish his education. This is because LD798 removes the right to religious and philosophical exemptions. When my brother started his education to earn a degree in mechanical engineering, like many of his peers, he thought it would be up to him to work hard and get his degree. However, because of LD798 removing his right to religious and philosophical exemptions, he found out that it was actually up to other powers outside of his control.

I also wanted to go to trade school, I was told we need more electricians. However, LD798 tells me otherwise. Since it was passed, I am not allowed to attend trade school.

The damage of LD798 has already been done, I am asking the committee to right their wrongs by reinstating LD51, which will give us back our religious and philosophical exemptions.

Thank you.