

William Smith

Gorham, ME

Concerning LD 51 "An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions to Immunization Requirements" LD 1098 "An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions Regarding Immunization Requirements" and LD 1209 "An Act to Reinstate the Religious and Philosophical Vaccine Exemptions for Private Schools and Virtual Public Charter Schools"

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I, William Smith, am testifying in SUPPORT of LDs 51, 1098 and 1209.

I have no doubt that other testimonies will express a view that equal treatment under the law for people of all religions and for those with no religion is a fundamental precept of American law. In addition, I imagine some testimonies will sight that no major religion opposes vaccines or immunization as a whole and that other states have, therefore, passed similar laws to those existing in Maine removing religious and/or philosophical exemptions.

My wife and I did not choose over 12 years ago to move our family to Connecticut, New York, or California. We moved our family to Maine, a state with clear views declared by the founding Maine citizenry in its Constitution and has a long-standing history of independently minded people who define "worship" themselves.

The founding peoples of our state were so convicted to religious independence that Article I, Section 3 of the Maine Constitution asserts:

"All individuals have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and no person shall be hurt, molested or restrained in that person's liberty or estate for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of that person's own conscience, nor for that person's religious professions or sentiments."

Legislation or Executive Branch decisions that remove any individual's unalienable rights must be based upon clear and deliberate gathering of a variety of information from as many sources with the intent of presenting that information for review by the Governor and Legislative body.

On January 08, 2021 I made a FOAA request for the report and/or analysis performed by Maine government or Maine CDC which would have been summarily presented for the governor's review before her signing LD 2167 in to law [1].

The response I received from Maine DHHS was that a search was performed and did not return any responsive records or information.

Resultingly it was my discovery that such analysis was not performed by the Maine CDC or Governor Mills' office before Maine moved on their handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This conclusion not only creates significant doubt in my mind as to the capability of the Governor's office to intelligibly aggregate and disseminate information in relation to future Emergency Actions but also

doubt with respect to the quality of research they will perform and level of due diligence they will put forth before adding any novel drug therapies to our children's vaccination schedule.

It is therefore with strong conviction that I advise you to pass LDs 51, 1098 and 1209.

Thank you for your time.

[1] Full FOAA request

On January 08, 2021 I requested "the summary report and/or summary analysis performed by Maine government or Maine CDC presented for Gov. Mills' review describing the analysis performed by and/or data gathered by Maine government officials or Maine CDC to determine the short and long-term effects (economic, psychological, physically, etc...) of mandates and "lock downs" as dictated by the Governor of Maine's office and/or CDC during the COVID-19 epidemic as declared in S.P. 789 - L.D. 2167 signed in to law, now PL 2019, c. 617 and copy of the updates to said summary report and/or summary analysis since that initial date of March 18, 2020"