

Horkan, Dylan

From: diane zavotsky <dzavotsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 6, 2025 3:05 PM
To: Cmte EDU
Subject: Testimony in OPPOSITION to LD 174 and 727

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Dear Sir/Madam,

As per my recent email I am using this alternate way to submit a written copy of the testimony I plan to give to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs on April 7

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs My name is Diane Zavotsky, MD a Family Physician from Embden. I strongly oppose LD 174 and LD. 727 because I believe our state should continue to protect children and communities from preventable infectious diseases.

In 2019 Maine voters overwhelmingly approved vaccine laws that significantly limited non-medical exemptions, vaccination rates rose and more of our children are protected from illnesses such as measles, whooping cough and meningitis. Several of these conditions are now so rare, due to effective vaccines, that medical colleagues just a few years younger than me may never have seen a case of them. That fact lulls us into a false sense of safety and an overinflated concern about harms from vaccines. In fact the risk of a serious adverse event from an MMR vaccine is less than .03%. By comparison, some studies estimate the risk of a serious bleed from aspirin can be increased by 70%. We are taught in pharmacology courses in medical school that vaccines are the safest "drug" we can prescribe, unequivocally.

I have not personally seen a death from measles or haemophilus influenza B, but I have seen a 6 week old infant hospitalized in an ICU from pertussis during a community outbreak largely transmitted by unvaccinated school aged children. I personally treated a child who ended up permanently blind and hearing impaired after meningococcal meningitis before the vaccine was available.

Having traveled to rural Belize and Guatemala as a medical volunteer I've seen how enthusiastic parents in these under resourced countries are to have vaccines for their children. They are much more intimately aware of the devastating effects of these illnesses and are incredulous to learn that American parents refuse vaccines.

Do not reverse the will of the people of Maine and do not ignore proven public health science. Passing these two bills would do both. I urge you to vote "ought not to pass" on LD 174 and LD 727.

Respectfully, Diane Zavotsky, MD

Sent from my iPad