

Tuesday, Feb 10, 2026

Testimony of Maine Families for Vaccines in support of 2146 & 2071
Submitted by Caitlin Gilmet, Director

Good afternoon, members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Maine Families for Vaccines in support of LD 2146 and LD 2071.

Maine Families for Vaccines was formed after the passage of Public Law 154, which protects kids like my son, Thomas. Shortly after he started daycare as an infant, he caught chickenpox. Parents like me shared our stories, and Maine voters responded— approving our strong school vaccine law by a 73 percent majority. That vote reflected something simple and powerful: Maine families value vaccines and want systems that protect our kids.

Since then, our work has grown into a national network with 14 state-based Families for Vaccines chapters. Across states and across political lines, our polling and policy work show the same thing again and again: families want stable access to vaccines, clear rules, and systems they can rely on without confusion or disruption. I'm proud that what started here in Maine has become a model for grounding public health policy in science and the will of the people.

We do not take lightly that these bills ask Maine to step into a space that has traditionally been anchored at the federal level. Under normal circumstances, states should be able to rely on consistent, science-driven federal guidance. Right now, with vaccines increasingly politicized, that stability can't be assumed. Federal advisory processes have become increasingly uncertain and, at times, out of step with the priorities of the pro-vaccine majority—especially in a state like Maine, where support for vaccination is strong and clear.

LD 2146 and LD 2071 are a practical response to that moment.

LD 2146 helps keep Maine's immunization system steady and predictable by preserving evidence-based standards and protecting against funding gaps if federal processes falter. It's about continuity—making sure what works today keeps working tomorrow.

LD 2071 focuses on how families actually get care. Pharmacies are a routine part of health care for many Mainers, particularly in rural areas. This bill helps ensure vaccines remain available and affordable in those settings, while keeping appropriate safeguards and oversight in place.

The impact of these choices is visible right now. States with lower immunization rates are experiencing serious measles outbreaks. South Carolina has reported more than 900 cases. Maine has reported just one, and public health officials expect limited spread because strong protections are already in place.

That difference reflects policy decisions.

Maine has the opportunity to continue leading by reinforcing the systems that keep disease rates low and families protected. These bills are grounded in the approach Maine families already trust, with a focus on keeping those protections steady and dependable.

For these reasons, Maine Families for Vaccines urges the committee to support LD 2146 and LD 2071.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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