

Brian McCallion
Lisbon

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am testifying in support of LD 96 - An Act To Create Fairness in the Treatment of Students by Retaining Students with Certain Vaccine Exemptions, LD 156 - An Act To Promote School Attendance by Exempting Virtual Public Charter School and Private School Students from Immunization Requirement, LD 833 - An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Vaccines by Reinstating Religious Exemptions, and LD 1082 - An Act To Improve Educational Opportunities by Exempting Children Who Attend Virtual Public Charter Schools from Immunization Requirements and Expanding Enrollment at Virtual Public Charter Schools.

I am asking your support of these bills for my children and thousands of children across our state. It is imperative that all children be given equal opportunities for education regardless of their religious or medical choices. After LD798 passed last year my children lost their rights to attend the charter school where they have been enrolled for the past 4 years. This was a sad day for our children, our educational system, the state of Maine, and our family. It left us feeling unsure about our future living here. It has forced my wife to leave the school system where she is a teacher of ten years. It greatly hurts the school system to lose someone with so much skilled training, dedication, commitment, and love of teaching. You have now lost a highly valuable and experienced teacher along with two very bright, vibrant, healthy students as well. It has made us think twice about continuing to stay in Maine. It's terrible to think that a child's education be stripped from them in order to force a more divisive agenda. I ask that you think about the thousands of healthy children who will no longer be allowed to attend Maine's public and private schools. I urge you to support these bills and help reinstate some of the educational opportunities available to Maine children. It's a disgrace to think that a child be denied the right to an education regardless of what their religious, philosophical, or medical distinctions may be.

In hope,