

Codey Begin
Vassalboro
LD 51

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the committee, I am asking you to vote ought to pass on LD 51.

I am in full support of LD51, for the following reasons:

1. I spent three years of my former life studying to become an Occupational Therapy Assistant in the state of Maine. When LD798 was enacted, I realized there would be very few job opportunities in the healthcare field where I would have full informed consent & bodily autonomy to make my own medical decisions - something I was taught as a standard of ethics in the healthcare field for patients themselves. I will not work in a field where I cannot choose what medical interventions I will receive. This violates not only my own core values, but also the ethics I was taught to respect and uphold in OT school. This law has directly affected my future career in the healthcare field. My years of study were all for nothing unless my right to opt-out is restored with LD51.

2. I have small children and this law has prevented them from access to daycare, preschool, and if it is still in place by the time they are school age, it will prevent their access to all public & private educational opportunities. Their medical decisions should be made by their healthcare provider and parents, not government agencies or institutions in a one-size-fits-all schedule.

3. The former laws in place before LD798, allowed for freedom of choice as well as guidelines for keeping disease outbreaks out of schools. This has worked well for decades, and the new law has done nothing but exclude children and adults alike from access to education and community support.

Though a lifelong resident of Maine, I have seriously considered leaving the state for one where our rights are respected and my family will have far more career and educational opportunities. I ask you to vote to pass LD51.

Sincerely,
Codey Begin