

Molly Chase
Scarborough
LD 51

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

I am writing in support of this legislation to return the right of Maine citizens to have medical autonomy combined with equal access to education and employment. One could argue that we still have the right to choose. And you would be right-we don't have to choose a public/college education for our kids or have to choose a job that provides a good income-we could remain uneducated, poor, and stressed beings. When we lose the ability to have equal opportunities for our citizens it comes at a great cost; in dollars, in mental health decline, in education loss, and an overall decline in our society as a whole.

I worked in the healthcare system in 2020. I cannot go back. So I had to choose to not have a job that provided a good income for my family. If this bill you are considering passes I would have the option to once again work in that field. I am not a risk to anyone. I was never a threat to anyone. But because I don't have a medical issue, I cannot go back to my job.

My two college-age kids have medical exemptions. It has been incredibly stressful navigating this climate and the discrimination they have faced. Their future is unpredictable and has put undue stress on our family. I implore you to pass this bill and allow young people to make independent decisions about their life and body and not have to be defined by their illnesses.

Every person should have medical choices. When there is risk there needs to be a choice. By passing this bill you provide an equal ground to ALL citizens. Please consider each person and the lives they live and the intricacies that exist. No one should have to defend why they don't want to take a particular medicine. This is the United States of America. We are a free society.

Respectfully please vote "ought to pass" on LD51.