

Dawne McGrath
Gardiner
LD 51

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

This bill has been introduced for the 2023 Maine Legislative session by Representatives Drinkwater of Milford and Perkins of Dover-Foxcroft. Very simple in nature, this bill would restore the religious and philosophical exemptions for students, and certain healthcare facilities. It would not repeal current immunization requirements or mandates; it would, however, reinstate the original religious and philosophical opt outs that existed for decades prior to 2019.

LD 51 doesn't address just one group or one type of vaccine. It gets to the root of the problem and essentially repeals 798 and puts back everything it took away. Patients want to make their own medical decisions, and they have the legal right to do so. They expect their physicians to share knowledge with their patients to inform the best choices. Medical decisions ought to be made by individual patients based on their individual situation and personal best interest. 'One size fits all' medicine denies informed consent and personal autonomy.

Financial incentives paid to medical industries and medical providers during the last three years by the government interfered with the doctor-patient relationship. Government vaccination mandates for healthcare workers and schools did not provide protection from the virus and infections. Federal and state governments cannot make themselves the arbiters of the medical decisions between the patients and their physicians. Patients are individuals and experience different risks from vaccinations and may have medical or psychological issues that preclude receiving certain vaccinations.. Doctors need to be able to issue waivers for vaccinations since they would have the best knowledge and judgment to issue such waivers.

Parents are wholly responsible for their children, with a few limited exceptions, and to bypass them and allow underage children to decide what gets injected into them is inconsistent with state laws, medical ethics, common sense, and optimal medical care of children.

Scientific knowledge will continue to evolve, and the suppression of medical professionals' speech is illegal, according to the First Amendment and state statutes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.