



**Testimony of Lance Boucher,
Assistant Vice President, State Public Policy - Eastern,
American Lung Association**

**in Opposition to LD 867
An Act To Prohibit Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations for 5 Years To Allow for
Safety Testing and Investigations into Reproductive Harm**

January 11, 2022

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Lance Boucher. I am the Assistant Vice President, State Public Policy, Eastern Division, for the American Lung Association. The American Lung Association is offering testimony in opposition to LD 867 An Act To Prohibit Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations for 5 Years To Allow for Safety Testing and Investigations into Reproductive Harm.

The American Lung Association is the nation's oldest voluntary public health organization with a mission to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. We do this through education, advocacy, and research on behalf of the 36 million Americans living with lung diseases including lung cancer and COPD. When we found ourselves in the midst of a respiratory pandemic in 2020, the American Lung Association knew we had an important role. We launched a \$25 million campaign to end COVID-19 and defend against future respiratory virus pandemics, funding research awards and grants for preventative research as well as working to evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on patients with chronic lung disease. We have worked in coalition with government, private industry, and public health organizations to address this pandemic on every level.

Throughout our nation's history, vaccinations have been an important tool to save countless lives and eradicate deadly disease from smallpox to the flu and now they are an important tool to help us address the pandemic we face today. In a pandemic, time is measured in lives lost and people left with severe, debilitating health effects. The sooner we vaccinate every Mainer and American, the better chance we stand of ending the pandemic and moving our state and nation forward. LD 867 will derail our efforts and threaten the health of the 258,000 Mainers living with lung disease.

Our public policies should focus on ensuring everyone is vaccinated. [Over 206 million people in the United States are fully vaccinated](#), and billions of people worldwide have received a COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history and claims that they are not extensively tested are false. The [evidence is clear](#) that they reduce the risk of hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19, as well as the risk of contracting and spreading the virus.

As the trusted champion for lung health, the American Lung Association is focused on slowing the spread and defeating COVID-19. To further protect the overall population and those most vulnerable, we need a sufficiently high proportion of the population to get vaccinated to stop coronavirus transmission. We hope you will work to protect the health and safety of all Mainers by encouraging everyone to get vaccinated and boosted and reject policies that slow the uptake of vaccinations and spread false information about their safety. For those reasons we strongly urge you to oppose LD 867.

