

Ashley Dudley
South Thomaston

Good morning, Senator Claxon, Representative Meyer, and esteemed committee members.

I am here today to urge you to vote "ought to pass" for LD 867, An Act to Prohibit Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations to Allow for Informed Consent.

My name is Ashley Dudley, and I live in the town of South Thomaston. I am a Registered Nurse with more than seventeen years of experience in healthcare. I have served both as Nursing Director and as Infection Prevention and Control Officer.

I am strongly in favor of LD 867. This bill should pass because it will allow sufficient time to gather the reliable data needed to renew Mainers' trust in our government and our public health authorities.

Because of the questionable—and some might argue unethical—tactics used by hospital systems in the handling of the vaccine rollout, many Mainers have lost their trust in these once-respected institutions. This is the result of ineffective tactics like coercion, bullying, and retaliation. I, personally, have been the target of attempts at coercion by my employer, which included being offered gift cards for taking the COVID-19 vaccine and/or being entered into raffles for doing so. I have also experienced bullying by hospital administration, who threatened punishment for declining the vaccine. And ultimately, I experienced retaliation for declining it, as I was fired on October 29, 2021.

If LD 867 passes, it will allow me to return to the profession that I love, if only for the interim. I will once again put my years of formal education, specialized training, and national certification to good use serving the people of Maine. As was the case before and during the pandemic, I will diligently protect the health and well-being of my patients.

As of yet, the short-term and long-term effects of the COVID-19 vaccine are unknown. This bill will allow Mainers to see that—unlike the hospital systems—our government and our public health authorities do not make arbitrary rules. On the contrary, it will prove that the officials making these highly impactful decisions for our state are “doing the homework”, are investing the time necessary to get this right, and are devoted to protecting the health and safety of the people of Maine. The people of Maine will hopefully regain confidence in the science and, more importantly, a renewed trust in our state leadership.

Please vote for LD 867 "ought to pass".

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Ashley Dudley, RN