



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

**Testimony in Opposition**

**January 11, 2021**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN. I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations to comment in opposition to this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,500 employees statewide.

This bill presumes that COVID-19 vaccines have not been tested for safety nor the impact on women's reproductive health and proposes a 5-year period before COVID-19 vaccines can be mandated to allow for sufficient safety testing. The premise of this bill is factually incorrect.

The clinical trials for both safety and efficacy for each of the current vaccines involved tens of thousands of individuals covering a wide array of ages, ethnicities, and cultures. These are standard clinical trial numbers and, in many cases, exceeded the initial study numbers for commonly used medications. Over the past year millions of individuals have received each of these vaccines with very few reported serious events occurring. Contrast that to the number of people sick, hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19. For vaccines, serious and even not so serious events are typically picked up within a million doses administered. Even after tens of millions of doses of vaccines administered against COVID-19 we have not seen any large-scale reports of major side effects or significant numbers of serious events associate with these vaccines.

Northern Light Health is proud of our work to vaccinate the people of Maine, as of December 27, 2021 we have provided 361,769 doses of vaccines into arms. We are also proud of our work fulfilling our professional responsibility to provide our patients and employees with safe care environments. Thus, our announcement in August to require employees to be vaccinated within six weeks of full vaccine approval. We later testified in support of the Maine CDC immunization rule mandating COVID-19

Northern Light Health  
Government Relations  
43 Whiting Hill Road  
Brewer, Maine 04412

Office 207.861.3282  
Fax 207.861.3044

**Northern Light Health**  
Acadia Hospital  
A.R. Gould Hospital  
Beacon Health  
Blue Hill Hospital  
C.A. Dean Hospital  
Eastern Maine Medical Center  
Home Care & Hospice  
Inland Hospital  
Maine Coast Hospital  
Mayo Hospital  
Mercy Hospital  
Northern Light Health Foundation  
Northern Light Laboratory  
Northern Light Pharmacy  
Sebasticook Valley Hospital

vaccination of health care workers and met the standard of 100% of employees vaccinated on October 29<sup>th</sup>. Northern Light Health clinicians and leaders worked closely with our employees answering thousands of questions about COVID-19 vaccines with responses supported by the science behind the COVID-19 virus and vaccine development. We acknowledge the difficult choice made by those who declined vaccination and subsequently left our employment. We also note that the disruption was minimal in that only 3.04% of workforce chose not to be vaccinated. Having a vaccinated workforce keeps our employees safe from severe COVID-19 disease allowing each and every employee to fulfill their role in caring for our patients during this historic pandemic period of time.

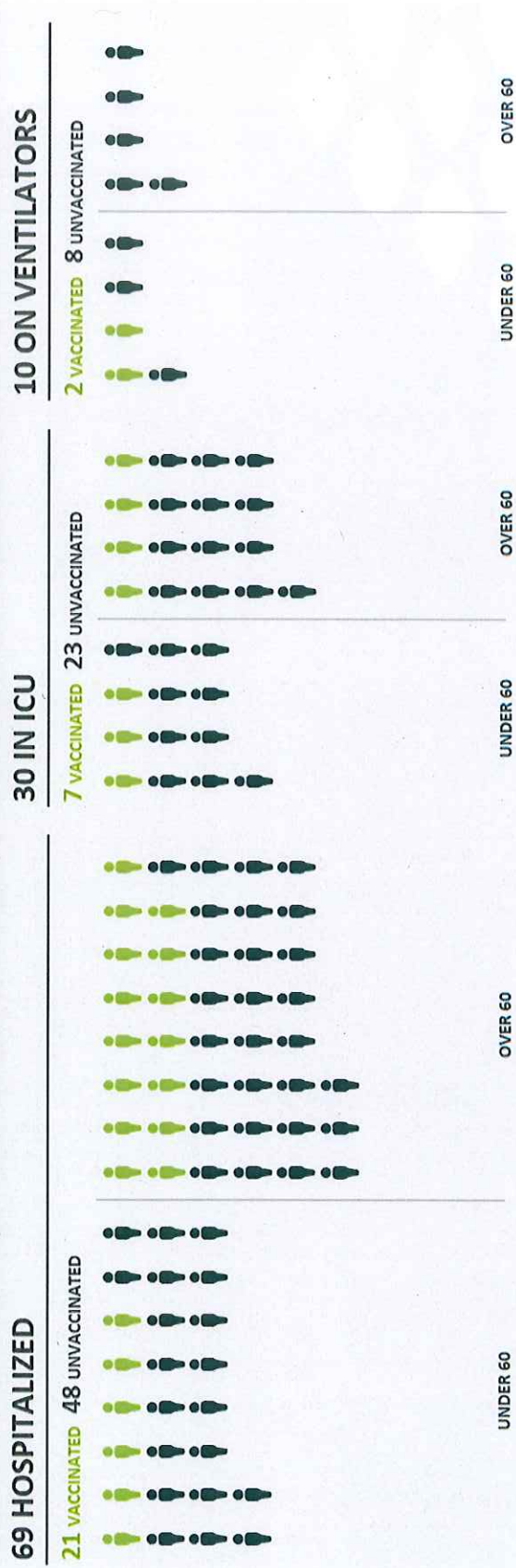
Our data on hospitalized patients with COVID-19 shows us every day that this is a pandemic of the unvaccinated. I have attached a recent snapshot of our COVID-19 average daily census of hospitalized patients for the period of October 5<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. Of the 69 hospitalized patients 69.5% are unvaccinated, looking at the most severe level of illness, 80% of our ventilator patients are unvaccinated. The trend of largely unvaccinated patients in our acute care beds with severe illness has been consistent over the past year. This includes unvaccinated pregnant women and their infants. Northern Light Health has cared for pregnant women in our intensive care units and infants born to infected mothers in our neonatal intensive care unit. Unfortunately, we have needed to transfer some women to other facilities when the level of care they need exceeds our capabilities. In addition, we have administered monoclonal antibodies to infected women in order to prevent severe disease during pregnancy. Monoclonal antibodies, while generally considered safe, do pose a higher risk than any vaccine currently in use to prevent COVID-19.

National medical professional organizations including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommend that that all eligible persons greater than the age of 12 years, including pregnant and lactating individuals, receive a COVID-19 vaccine or vaccine series.

This bill represents significant risk of increasing vaccine hesitancy which is already a challenge for some of Maine's population. Passing this bill establishes public policy that the legislature believes the vaccines are not safe and present risk to women of child-bearing age and this is simply not supported by the science.

We ask that you oppose this legislation.

# COVID-19 Vaccinations Prevent Hospitalization!



Data Source: Cerner, manual from Mayo.  
 Data represents a daily average from 10/05/21 - 12/31/21. Excludes weekends and holidays.  
 Vaccinated patients have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, but may not be considered fully-vaccinated per CDC guidelines.