January 13, 2022

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

Greetings Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Allison Long. I am a resident of Buckfield, a mother, an educator, and a public health advocate.

I am writing to urge you to vote that LD #867 ought not to pass. This bill is inspired by misinformation, anecdotes and conspiracy theories and it has no place in science-based public health policy. Businesses and employers in Maine who need to protect their customers and employees should always have the freedom to do so.

The legitimate, peer-reviewed science of COVID-19 vaccination could not be more clear. All three of the approved vaccines in the United States underwent extensive safety testing, and as of this week over **520 million** vaccines have been safely administered nationwide. As science has continually shown us, serious vaccine side effects reveal themselves within weeks of vaccination, not years. In 520 million doses, no evidence of significant adverse side effects, especially to the reproductive system, have been detected.

A five-year ban on mandates is senseless, dangerous and unnecessary. With solid data from trials and from 520 million administered doses nationwide, why would we wait another five years to implement mandates when necessary? Over 1600 Mainers have died with COVID-19--how many more will succumb in five years of chasing anecdotes and pseudoscience? Our healthcare system is overwhelmed and may be on the brink of collapse. How much more damage will be done to healthcare in another five years? It is imperative that we not find out. We need strong public health laws now.

Vaccine mandates work and Mainers overwhelmingly support them, as we demonstrated with a 3-to-1 referendum vote in March of 2020.

Please vote LD #867 “ought not to pass”. Thank you.

Allison Long
Buckfield