

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Danielle Paus and I am a resident of Phippsburg; I respectfully submit this testimony in support for LD 867. I am a registered nurse and have worked both hospital and hospice nursing through this pandemic serving my community.

A significant portion of my graduate work has focused on patient safety, informed consent and the delivery of quality healthcare to all patient populations without discrimination. [The Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#) (IHI) specifies six “Aims for Improvement” to build safer health systems. IHI lays out a clear action plan that all health care must be **safe**, it must be **effective**, **patient-centered**, **timely**, **efficient**, and lastly it should be **equitable**. I have numerous concerns around the safety of the Covid-19 injections, based on my personal experiences as a nurse and adverse reactions I have witnessed first-hand in my patients. Myocarditis in young men is another concerning trend we are seeing that is being attributed to the Covid-19 injections. We simply do not have the data or long-term studies to ensure safety for mandated, universal administration of these substances. There are individuals who cannot take these biological agents for medical, personal or religious reasons. Ethical issues arise when blanket mandates prevent individualized, **safe**, **patient-centered** delivery of care. In particular, I fear without a reasonable amount of time to conduct gold-standard research and data accumulation of long-term effects of these agents, the information is not available for individuals to make personal health decisions with fully **informed consent**.

We have seen robust natural immunity in health care workers who have successfully recovered from Covid-19, yet in many organizations and states (Maine included) these individuals are prevented from contributing their skills and expertise to the workforce because they respectfully decline further intervention by means of injection. The recognition of natural immunity also applies to school-age and college students. The language of the current bill allows for more time to collect data before imposing blanket mandates that will have potentially lasting negative effects.

Ultimately patients are suffering due to staffing shortages, particularly our elderly population in long term care facilities and nursing homes. Vaccinated or not, we are seeing an exodus of qualified healthcare workers leaving the state for high-paying travel jobs, or departing medicine entirely.

As we enter our 22<sup>nd</sup> month of pandemic living, many frontline physicians have developed early treatment protocols and clinical experience we did not possess in the early days of Covid. Please take this opportunity to consider the information and tools we now possess that we did not have nearly two years ago, that empowers us to provide quality healthcare through early treatment to save lives. A mandated injection with no long-term safety studies is not the only route to combat this virus. Fully informed consent requires full disclosure of all risks and alternatives, **and** the ability to chose or decline treatment without coercion or threats. This bill would allow time for necessary investigations and data analysis to support informed decision-making in regards the Covid-19 injection.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD 867. Thank you for your time in considering my testimony.