

Good morning Senator Claxon, Representative Meyer and esteemed committee members, I am here to urge you to vote "ought to pass" for LD 867. My name is Makayla Robinson. I have been a registered nurse with a bachelor's degree since May 2020. I have worked in healthcare since 2015. I recently lost my job due to refusing the COVID vaccine. I was not given informed and voluntary consent. I was also refused my civil right of religious freedom when I was denied my religious exemption. I was unable to receive long term studies or research on the vaccine. I decided to refuse the vaccine due to the unknown effects of the new technology. I started my nursing career as a student in a local hospital's emergency department. During this time it was the beginning of the pandemic. The protocols regarding COVID treatment, protection and safety were changing almost hourly. There were times the staff was told we could not wear masks to save on supplies, other times where I had worn my N95 for over 2 weeks. I continued to work to care for these sick people and comply with each COVID treatment and protection protocol given to me. My first day as a licensed RN I took on caring for all of the COVID patients my hospital had admitted. I never denied caring for COVID patients and cared for them with the great compassion and excellent patient care that I could. Being told that the COVID vaccine was going to be mandated for healthcare workers and I was going to be terminated if I did not comply broke me. I worked incredibly hard in school and as a nurse to care for the people of Maine. After asking multiple healthcare leaders and providers for data and studies on long term effects, I was informed that they were unable to provide those documents. I submitted my religious exemption and was told that the mandate does not allow it. I complied with serial testing and wearing proper PPE which was asked of me for the last two weeks of my employment by the hospital administration. When asked if I could continue to test and comply with proper PPE I was told no. I did not want to stop caring for patients. I want to continue my education and gain experience and knowledge. I am saddened by the conditions this mandate has left my fellow co-workers and the rest of the health care workers of Maine. Given the newly released policies from local hospitals stating those healthcare workers that become COVID positive may return to work earlier than the previous quarantine requirements due to the surge in patients and lack of staff. I believe others like myself should be able to return to work and allow time for this vaccine to be studied. It has shown that not only can vaccinated people contract COVID but vaccinated people can also spread the virus. By voting "ought to pass" you could allow many healthcare workers to return to work and reduce the workload and stress on the already fragile healthcare community. Please pass this bill and allow myself and others like me to return back to work.

Thank you for your time,

Makayla, RN BSN