

Senator Claxon, Representative Meyer and esteemed committee members,

Please consider this written testimony urging you to vote ought to pass LD 867.

I am a registered nurse with 25 years' experience. I had been working as a registered nurse for the same hospital in Maine since May 2006. During that time, I actively pursued continuing education and participated in hospital initiatives to provide and improve upon excellent patient care. I declined to receive the mandatory covid vaccine and on October 29, 2021, I was terminated from the hospital. After termination the earned sick leave that I had accumulated was withheld from me and I was told it was due to termination. I worked up until the day of my termination without ever receiving any disciplinary or poor evaluation form my supervisors, peers, or colleagues.

In August 2021, my 29-year-old daughter received her first dose of the Pfizer covid vaccine. Within days of receiving the vaccine she experienced multiple mini seizures, headaches, confusion, and weakness in her legs along with an overall general fatigue. She was evaluated by her primary care physician who could not find an immediate cause for her symptoms. She was told by her doctor that "it could be from the vaccine, it is new, and we just do not know what the side effects could be". While my daughter was awaiting further testing (head CT, MRI/MRA and EEG *a test that detects abnormalities in your brain waves*) she continued to have severe symptoms that prevented her from driving or living her usual life. Her tests were completed, and the results were all negative, there was no known cause for her condition. When she was due for her second dose of the Pfizer covid vaccine she received the vaccine. Her rationale for this was that she could not receive a medical exemption from her physician (her doctor stated she did not know for sure what the cause of the seizures was) and she was to start classes in the local community college that had a mandatory vaccine policy in effect. After receiving the second dose of the Pfizer covid vaccine she experienced left side paralysis on her face, and all her other symptoms above worsened. She is now on medication indefinitely for the prevention of seizures and her new symptoms. Even with medication she continues to have spasms in her face. This has severely altered her life, she is a stay-at-home mom with 4 young children aged 3, 6-year-old twins and 8. She is also fearful that if this vaccine became mandatory for her children, it is unknown if they too would experience life altering adverse effects as well.

My adult son works at a company that had informed their employees they would be initiating the covid vaccine mandate per OSHA. He decided he would go ahead and receive the covid vaccine. After his 1st dose of the covid vaccine he experienced severe arm pain, he reported this to his primary care physician during a physical weeks after he received the vaccine. There was no know cause found for his pain, yet it has been 7 weeks since he received the first covid vaccine, and it has not resolved. He decided to not get the second dose.

As a registered nurse I know there are multiple side effects people can experience from medications. I am asking you to consider this written testimony and urging you to vote ought to pass LD 867.

Thank you for your time in reviewing this testimony.

Respectfully,

Barbara Russell, BSN, RN – Eliot, ME

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