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South Portland

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Senator Claxon, Representative Meyer, and Esteemed Committee Members

Maine State Legislature

Augusta, Maine

Happy New Year and thank you for the commitment and service you all provide for our state and our people. I am writing today to implore you to consider a vote of "Ought to Pass" for LD 867 - An Act to Prohibit Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations for 5 Years to Allow for Safety Testing and Investigations into Reproductive Harm.

My name is Jessica Sobey, my address is 21 Bowers St South Portland. I am a lifelong Mainer, a former school educator, a mother, and a nurse. I have volunteered with many different nonprofits in the Portland area, assisting homeless youth and adults, teen mothers, our Immigrant, Refugee, and asylum seeking communities. I serve on a local Land Trust Board and have always been involved with the local Democratic and Green Parties politics. I have worked with Republican leaders as well and though our politics on the environment and gun policy were not always aligned I always tried to find common ground with my neighbors and those I felt political polarities with. I think that is where the most work and change can be accomplished.

When the pandemic hit, I was working at Maine Medical Center and a smaller outpatient infusion clinic. I was known by my colleagues and patients alike as a profoundly compassionate and strong nurse. I had several accolades from each of my employers and even won the esteemed International Daisy Award for Nursing Excellence not once, but twice. I have always advocated for my patients and informed consent. I believe strongly in informed consent as the core of medical ethics. I often would witness the very important role signing consent was, even in grave emergencies. While I did not always agree with my patient's choices to refuse care, especially when, as I saw it, a life, or sometimes two lives could be saved if the patient allowed intervention, I always supported the patient's choice. I have seen the evolution of medical interventions, treatments, and even procedures that have changed because of medical reversal (when a new or superior methodologically superior clinical trial produces results that contraindicate existing clinical practice). I remember being taught as a "rule" and a "right" that pain control was as equal and vital to a patient's well being as the four cardinal vital signs. As we openly administered higher and higher doses of pain medication while being told to dismiss fears around addiction as we did so. I have personally cared for patients who were hospitalized after severe vaccine injuries. I remember a time not too long ago when immunocompromised and pregnant patients were told to avoid certain medications and biologics which are now recommended by the major medical governing bodies. My concern is that mandates without proper long term risk/benefit analysis is not only unsafe, but unethical.

I walked away from a career, a calling, my identity because I am unwilling to take the medical risk. I have had medical exemption previously after having a severe response to vaccines. Few medical exemptions were allotted for this Covid 19 Biologic, many lay people do not realize that medical exemptions are next to impossible to have accepted. It makes little sense to risk the health of a person for a benefit that seems to be moving itself. This shot does not stop transmission of Covid 19. Proper PPE seems to help, and is used in medical facilities as a Universal Precautionary Principle.. I have watched, paralyzed to help my colleagues at MMC as the fully vaccinated staff is spreading Covid like wildfire in the hospital, the safest but riskiest place to be right now. If this mandate was reversed or at least halted, competent, compassionate nurses and other healthcare professionals could return to their proper place at the bedside and properly and safely care for our Maine Residents. Please consider this, break through the politics of this issue and come back to reason and ethics.

Sincerely,
Jessica Sobey RN
South Portland, Maine