

Good morning Senator Claxon, Representative Meyers, and esteemed committee members.

I am here today to urge you to vote "ought to pass" for LD 867, An Act to Prohibit Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations to Allow for Informed Consent

My name is Irina Yurkevich.

Twenty five years ago my family and I came to Maine from Kazakstan for better life for our children. In the 90's the situation there was terrible, mafia and gangs had all the power and money. They killed people, and stole their businesses. America was the greatest country respected by all other countries, fighting for the rights and freedoms of the people. I couldn't possibly have imagined that this would be happening in our lifetime, in this country, with rights violated, religious exemptions canceled, people forced to take the COVID shots, and many businesses closed.

I have given 23 years of my life to Maine Medical Center, working and studying very hard to get my nursing degree. For 14 out of 23 years I was working as an RN and I love my job very much; I loved my patients and their families. And according annual employee performance reviews, I was one of the best nurses on our floor. I was working with covid patients without any hesitation or fear, because I trust in God and I believe that everything is in God's will.

For the last four years I was the only one working in my family of three (my husband and son 11 years old, with mild form of Autism). My husband is not in good health, with very bad scoliosis.

I was fired on October 29th because of COVID-19 vaccine mandate. Now we have no health and life insurance and no paycheck every two weeks.

How is it possible that I worked the previous two years of the pandemic without a Covid-19 vaccine, but now I am expendable? Many other nurses feel the same as I do: forced, coerced and under a lot of pressure to take this mandatory experimental injection without discussion. To force or mandate anyone to take a vaccine that does not prevent infection from Delta variant or Omicron is a violation of medical ethics.

In the Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers it states: **"it is your choice to receive or not to receive"**; then why did they fire nurses? In order for us nurses to keep our jobs we are forced to take an experimental shot, where **"serious or unexpected side effects may occur"** This is not moral. This causing psychological, physical, and financial harm.

The COVID-19 vaccine mandate violates the right to freely exercise religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

In addition, there is no guarantee of protection from potential temporary or permanent injury or even death. According to VAERS data as of December 31, 2021: 21,382 deaths; 113,303 hospitalization; 110,785 urgent care; 158,762 office visits; 8,765 anaphylaxis; 12,765 Bell's palsy; 3,511 miscarriages; 10,863 heart attacks; 23,713 myocarditis/pericarditis; 36,758 permanently disabled; 5,102 thrombocytopenia/ low platelets; 24,344 life threatening; 36,955 severe allergic reactions; 11,628 shingles (<http://www.openvaers.com/covid-data>).

I am not anti-vaccine, I have always taken vaccines that show good efficacy throughout the decades. I am pro good science, true data, statistics, and research. I will never agree to force anything on anyone.

I came here with my family and kids for freedom and I will stand for freedom.

I urge you to vote for LD 867 "ought to pass".

Irina Yurkevich RN CLC

January 10, 2022