



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee of Public Health
In support of S.1517/H.2271 An act promoting Community Immunity
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July 12, 2021**

Currently Massachusetts does not have localized community immunity (e.g. herd immunity) across the state for many vaccine preventable diseases. The Department of Public Health (DPH) lacks the data on immunization rates in daycare centers, schools, summer camps, and colleges because data reporting is neither standardized nor mandatory. Overburdened school administrators are charged with processing vaccine exemption requests, a process that should be managed by public health professionals. There is no requirement to notify parents and guardians if immunization rates drop low enough at a school or program to put children at increased risk of contracting disease.

This bill will create a consistent baseline immunization policy across Massachusetts schools, preschools, daycare centers and summer camps. Mandatory reporting will allow for accurate data collection by DPH that will help identify local gaps in vaccination rates and allow appropriate and effective interventions to reduce vaccine hesitancy and achieve community immunity.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, representing 47 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges the Joint Committee on Public Health to support this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.