

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in regards to the proposed house bill 3063. I am a retired certified midwife, now in nursing school, as well as the mother of a 1st grader in Bend, Oregon.

I am highly concerned about any legislation that includes the words "Removes ability of parent to decline [any medical procedure]". As a health care professional who has served nearly 500 families faced with the decision to vaccinate their newborn or not, I can tell you that every family has weighed heavily this decision. It is challenging to dig through the plethora of medical information and research and try to decide which route feels safest considering the genetic history of each family. Each family I cared for took hours of time, careful conversations with their doctors, and with grimaced faces either vaccinated, or did not. Neither choice seems to come with 100% confidence. I served families who fully vaccinate, those who partially did or did a delayed scheduled, and some who did not accept any vaccinations. I can't testify as to why each family chose what they did but I can tell you that when a family decides to research vaccines and wants to choose something other than what is recommended there is very little to be done to change their mind. [After California passed the law](#) to remove exemptions, more families sought out medical exemptions and the rate of vaccination only increased by 2.3%, still leaving 4.9% of school children unvaccinated by medical exemption. It did not have the desired effect of 100% coverage. Families either sought medical exemption, pulled their children out of school, or moved (to Oregon!). I do not believe that this law in Oregon will have a different effect on our parents who choose not to vaccinate. From my experience as a health care provider I do believe that parents who are forced to choose medical interventions that they do not agree with are more likely to become litigious should they experience undesirable effects. Vaccines do carry a risk, regardless of how small that risk may be, it is not disputed that they do carry a risk. This is common information, available in the [inserts of the products themselves](#). I do believe that parents who feel forced into vaccinating and suffer adverse effects will be more likely to pursue compensation through the VEARS program where taxpayers have [paid out](#) \$73,121,911.19 already in 2019, and a total of \$4,061,322,557.08 since 1989, with the highest paying year being in 2017, with a total of \$282,096,906.34. I don't think it is a coincidence that the highest payout year came just two years after California passed their law to remove a parents right to choose personal exemption.

Regardless of anyone's thoughts or opinions, or any research done on vaccines, or their effect on eradicating disease or causing harm, they ARE a medical intervention. The citizens of this country and of our state need to remain in control of their own medical decisions. Setting a precedent that the government can punish citizens for their medical decisions by restricting access to public education is unethical. It is the WRONG way to encourage vaccination, discourage abortion, promote STI screening, encourage birth control or any other medical topic that improves public health. PLEASE do not pass this detrimental, freedom restricting bill.

Thank you for reading.

Kindra Kennedy