

I'm writing you today about HB 3063.

What I love about Oregon is our open-mindedness and our desire for freedom for all.

When I gave birth to my first child, my plan was to vaccinate on the standard schedule. And we did.

Until, after his two month shots, he would just sometimes be absent, gone from this world. It would last a few seconds to a minute at a time.

He was an early mover, rolling from birth and crawling on his face and hands and legs from 3-3.5 months. He received his four month shots on schedule a week or so after he turned 4 months. My previously active child slowed to almost no activity. He would stare. He stopped most rolling. He stopped all crawling. He stopped holding his head up. He increased in the number of times a day and length of time he would spend staring into space.

I am a highly educated medical professional, a Doctor of Physical Therapy. I have experience with

pediatrics. These behaviors and regressions are not normal. I highly suspect that one of his vaccines induced an abnormal neurological response.

Working with his pediatrician, we figured out which one. Under the new law, my child may or may not qualify for a medical exemption.

We don't know everything there is to know about vaccines, not even close. Current research suggests that there may be a genetic component to vaccine injury, but given the highly politicized (and polarized!) atmosphere around vaccines, what is accepted as main line thinking is very arbitrary, and to me, who is trained in appropriate scientific and medical research, all studies at this point are suspect for one widely accepted reason or another. Not high enough quality to the standards of scientific research. Not long enough. Not enough study participants. Conducted by someone who stands to gain or lose due to the data or the interpretation of the data. There being a genetic component to vaccine injury — if that's true — could mean that my other children are at risk for injury.

When I had my second child, we also vaccinated. After every round of vaccines she would stop sleeping. It is disturbing to have a child who sleeps 14-16 hours a day in large chunks suddenly stop any consolidated sleep. She wouldn't start sleeping again until 2 months after her vaccines. Then she would sleep... until her next round of vaccines. The first time, I thought it was a fluke. The second time, I thought it was a coincidence. The third time I was very uncomfortable and after that experience decided to wait a while. She has had no sleep disturbance since. Her doctor says that sleep disturbance is not a known side effect of any vaccine. Known side effect or not, sleep is a neurological function. I strongly suspect that she had a disruption to her neurological functioning, like her brother. Under the new law, my second child who is at least adversely affected by vaccines if not injured would not be able to obtain an exemption.

Nor would any of my future children be able to obtain exemptions while we wait to find out

whether or not vaccine injury does in fact have a genetic component.

What this bill passing means for my family is that my children will not be allowed to participate in any kind of daycare or school setting. This bill forces us to choose between one of our careers and our children's vaccine status.

I'm writing you to ask you to please do everything you can to end HB 3063. I love Oregon because I love freedom, and one of the freedoms I value the most is the ability to protect my children—these individuals for whom I have given my income, body, diet, sleep, dignity and twice now, nearly my life—as I and my partner think and feel is most appropriate to the specific circumstance we find ourselves in. By taking away this medical freedom of choice about their bodies, you require us to risk our children's health and lives in order to participate with any kind of care or schooling outside of the home. I firmly believe this is wrong. You did not spend months of your life pacing with

an avoidably screaming infant. You did not watch your child stare absently into space on repeat, every time wondering whether you would see him come back to look out at the world again. It is not ethical to functionally take this choice from parents who have given of their very bodies to have these children.

What I love about Oregon is freedom. Please do not take that away.

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