

Hello,

I am writing to tell you that I oppose HB 3063. I am a mother of a child with a vaccine related injury that resulted in an autoimmune Kidney Disease. While this bill has good intentions of protecting our kids, I feel that it is also leaving other kids and families out. Doctors do not currently test children to see if they would have any possibility of a reaction to any vaccine. The CDC currently updated their list of "Who Should Not Get Vaccinated" and it is categorized by vaccine. Because of my son's Kidney Disease by that list, neither him or his siblings should receive the MMR vaccine and yet when I took my 3 month old baby to her Well Child visit, the doctor did not ask me any familial history or give me any information relative to that list for me to consider. This issue is 100% on the parents to research and educate themselves. Which is what we have done. Despite the CDC giving this recommendation, my children's doctor will not sign a medical exemption for the MMR vaccine.

To receive the vaccine, I would be risking my child relapsing with his Kidney Disease which is currently in remission because we have not vaccinated, and risk subjecting my other children to triggering an autoimmune response that is not reversible. I can see how passing this bill would possibly protect some children who are immune compromised, but passing this bill would also put other children at risk, which is why it should be up to the parents and not the government. We do not mandate that immune compromised children subject themselves to environments and situations that would be high risk for them, why should it be mandated to get my son and children vaccinated which would increase their risk of triggering an autoimmune disease? We cannot as government and society pick which child is more important to protect or save.

I believe parents should retain their rights to refuse vaccinations without being coerced, and I believe all children should have access to an education regardless of vaccination status. To exclude children from school due to their vaccination status would be discriminatory towards a medical decision they made.

My son was immune compromised for half of a year at 3 and a half years old. I had to quit my childcare business, keep him out of preschool and childcare, and even stayed home during Christmas and Thanksgiving to protect his fragile immune system. It is hard to be in that situation but that is also the reality of that situation. Even the common cold can lead to life threatening complications for immune compromised children. Taking my son anywhere at that time was a calculated risk at that time and I was solely responsible for it. I had no right to demand anything from anyone else, or impose their rights to their own medical care to try and protect my child. I am not being insensitive here, I intend to portray that being a parent of a child like that is not easy in any scenario and no amount of herd immunity is going to 100% protect that child. I wouldn't even trust him to catch the common cold, but again I cannot force other children to not go to school with a cold so I had to keep him home.

Only 2.7% of Oregon schoolchildren currently hold a philosophical or religious exemption, meaning that scientifically we already have high community immunity to disease. Therefore, there's no reason to take away parental rights to those using non-medical exemptions.

There are many reasons parents use those exemptions. Perhaps their child has had a reaction to a vaccination that doesn't qualify for a medical exemption or doctors for some reason won't do it like in our situation, and so they choose to not longer use that vaccine, even if they use others. Perhaps they are using a spaced out or reduced schedule.

There is a lot of gray area that the exemptions allow while still keeping every child healthy and vaccination rates high.

I hope you will not support this bill.

Thank you for reading,

Karina Estep