

Desiree LeFave
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February 28, 2019

Dear Oregon Legislators,

I am writing as an Oregon birth center owner and a (now retired) midwife of 18 years, regarding my firm believe that HB3063 is unsafe, especially for the babies that businesses like mine care for.

It is not the government's position to make medical decisions for individual children, and I feel strongly that this bill is wrong in giving government the authority to require a child to lose out on their education or child care, due to their vaccine status. This is why we have health care providers and parents working together in caring for children. It is my hope that you will not allow this bill to pass, but I also want to share with you ways that it could become safer for children if you won't agree to oppose HB3063.

It is a well known, scientific fact that babies have immature immune systems which are in the process of developing. They are learning how to respond from a cellular level to the things they come in contact with. This process goes on for about the first six years of life, but is most vulnerable in the first year. It is a process that ultimately sets up an immune system's responses which carry on throughout their entire life and giving vaccines to babies under the age of one causes damage to their immature immune systems.

My hope at the very least is that you will allow for parents to choose to exempt their babies under the age of one. Many cases of SIDS are within days and even hours of a vaccine, and the vast majority of SIDS cases are babies under one. I also implore you to allow a delay of the MMR until the age of three as it is proven to be many times safer in children that are three years old in comparison to children who are one year old.

I also am compelled to tell you about the technology that we know have with genetic testing using a simple saliva sample. Because science is advancing in this area, we need to use that data to increase the safety of our babies and children. I would ask that you add a requirement to your bill that insurance companies cover genetic testing for children under the age of three, so that at the very least, parents can find out if their infants are more likely to be adversely affected by vaccinations. If it is found by such testing that they are positive for methylation defects (such as MTHFR, MTRR, etc,) it should be allowed that they decide on when, and if, vaccinations should be given to their children, as they are known to increase the likelihood of vaccine related injuries. Therefore, this bill should allow for medical exemptions for individuals of any age who test positive for methylation defects.

In summary, it is necessary to add exemptions for:

- Babies under the age of one
- Those with documented methylation defects
- And allowing a provision for choosing to wait to vaccinate with the MMR until age three, even for normally methylating children

These are just a few of the ways that you can keep babies safer. Although far from perfect, I believe these things would at least help in improving the safety of vaccinations for our babies and children.

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Another necessary considerations:

-It would need to be agreed upon to cap the number of vaccinations rather than adding more to the schedule. Now that most babies in the United States (including Oregon) are recommended to receive them for a total of about 38 doses of 14 diseases, by the time they reach 15 months of age, more parents are losing confidence in the amount of vaccines being suggested. It simply feels like way too much to ask a baby to handle.

-The state would need to come up with a way to track and safely, intelligently respond to data about the vaccines given. If not, it seems that the State of Oregon would be opening itself up to legal suits from vaccine injured families. This seems enormously vulnerable and a burden that I question (especially) Oregon's financial ability to handle. Please remember that these vulnerabilities are all because of a VERY small number of children not being fully vaccinated.

I think you will find that some parents are more willing to agree to vaccinations if you focus more on using them as safely as possible. Some will still not be comfortable with vaccinating and I think we will see them either home educate their children, whether or not that works well for their family (therefore potentially sacrificing the quality of education in Oregon,) or become residents of another state.

Please do not ask Oregon parents to make such decisions when there are so many ways to increase human immunity, and vaccines for only a small fraction of the more than 10,000 viruses in the world. We need immunity much more than we need a few vaccinations.

If this all feels like a very complex issue, and hard for lawmakers to sort through the exemptions to the conditions of our more vulnerable populations, question again if it is your place to do so. I believe it is not. Most of you do not have a medical perspective and there is no tangible way to include every rare possibility needed by individual children in Oregon now and in the future. Every child is just as important as those in your own families. Consider if yours were the ones unaccounted for in exemptions. This is the reason that families solicit the help of trained medical professionals in making their family's healthcare decisions. Any considerations other than that are gravely misguided.

Sincerely,

Desiree LeFave

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