

DATE 2/28/2019

TO Oregon State Legislature, Senate Committee on Health Care

Re: Support for HB 3063

Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

I am Kevin Wherry and I am a physician in Lincoln City, OR. I am writing to urge your support of HB 3063, which seeks to remove the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law.

There has been a lot of discussion of the risks and benefits of immunizations versus the harms. I am very worried about the future care of my pediatric patients especially with the twisting of facts that I see consistently. I inform and teach the parents of my patients on a daily basis and try to correct the erroneous information that has been presented. One of the most egregious transgressions that opponents to vaccinations bring up is the lack of measles mortality benefit. They point to a graph showing lack of mortality prior to the vaccine being introduced as evidence to prove that the vaccine was not helpful. Unfortunately, the graph has been purposefully altered with the lower half of the graph being removed which shows measles cases not mortality. The amount of measles cases had minimal improvement prior to introduction of the vaccine. One of the largest cases of measles mortality was caused by pneumonia which we were able to treat with antibiotics (introduced in the 1930s when the cases of measles mortality started to improve.) As we are quickly reaching the "post antibiotic era" pneumonias are going to be more difficult or impossible to treat resulting in deaths increasing again without a strong vaccination program.

We need to allow all children to be able to go to school if they choose. Without high rates of immunizations vulnerable populations of children will not be able to go to school safely. We are effectively removing the choice of these children going to school because others are not willing to protect them.

Please stand up for the truth, stand up for science, and do not let fear dictate policy.

Summation: I ask the committee to protect children's lives as a pediatric physician and a proud father of 2 fully immunized boys. Please support HB 3063.

Thank you,

Kevin Wherry, MD Internal Medicine/Pediatrics