

DATE 3/1/19  
TO Oregon State Legislature, Senate Committee on Health Care  
Re: Support for HB 3063

Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

I am Dr. Holly Tse, Associate Medical Director at Legacy GoHealth Urgent Care, writing to urge your support for HB 3063, which seeks to remove the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law.

As a pediatrician and internist, I feel passionately that vaccines save lives. The current anti-vaxxer movement is taking us backwards as a society, and people are being harmed as a result.

Our Legacy GoHealth Urgent Care clinics in Washington and Oregon have been directly affected by the measles outbreak. Aside from the unfortunate and preventable symptoms for confirmed measles patients, our providers, staff, and other patients have been negatively impacted by the constant possibility of measles cases arriving at our clinics. I have personally spent hours developing triage algorithms and training staff and providers in how to use them, to try to sort out low-risk from high-risk patients. Whenever a possible measles patient arrives in clinic, it generates anxiety and takes extra time to sort out how to properly care for that patient without exposing other patients in the waiting room. If a real exposure does occur, the room and possibly entire clinic have to be closed for two hours, which impacts patient care and costs money. Then we spend more time contacting the health department and tracking the case along with them.

**None of this had to happen. This outbreak was preventable.** Those who opt out of vaccinating their children DO place other vulnerable members of the population, including infants and those with compromised immune systems, at greater risk for exposure. **Choosing not to vaccinate healthy children is an unconscionable and anti-scientific act which endangers our whole community.**

Despite what you may have heard, vaccines do not cause autism in children. Scientists at the CDC, the Institute of Medicine and other reputable entities have never found a credible link between the use of vaccines and autism in children.

Key Messages:

- **Vaccines save lives.** Vaccines are not perfect, but they are much better than catching the disease “naturally,” which can kill or lead to permanent disability. Who wants to go back to the days when kids were kept inside during the summer, for fear of catching polio?
- **Vaccine exemption rates are skyrocketing in Oregon.** Right now, 7.5% of children in kindergarten are unvaccinated, putting us below the community immunity threshold and endangering vulnerable populations.
- **This isn't about removing choice, this is about protecting those who have NO choice.** Individuals with compromised immune systems, infants, cancer survivors, transplant recipients and many others have no protection against certain diseases. As a conscientious society, it is our responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves by getting vaccinated.
- Anti-vaccine parents love their children just as much as we do. **But they are making the wrong choice, based on inaccurate evidence or just “gut feelings.” Let’s not go backwards as a society.**

I ask the committee to protect children’s lives. Please support HB 3063. Please call me if I can be of any further assistance.

Thank you,

Holly Tse, M.D.

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