

February 27, 2019

Hello,

I am writing to tell you that I oppose HB 3063, the bill to end all non-medical vaccine exemptions for Oregon schoolchildren. 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.

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, 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. They may be a member of a religion (such a Jehovah's Witness), which is morally opposed to the use of vaccination. In my particular case, I have chosen to delay some vaccines at times when my children are sick and their immune system is run down. If this bill were to pass, my child wouldn't be allowed at school until they made a full recovery and were then vaccinated. This punishes my children unnecessarily. In another instance, my daughter has a compromised immune system. She has had pneumonia three times in the past 11 years. If a vaccination were to fall in these periods of recovery, which they have in the past, I would have no choice but to vaccinate or keep her out of school. This could further delay her recovery, or have worse consequences to her health. I support full informed consent of vaccinations. I support a parents individual rights to do as they best see fit for their children's health. PLEASE do not take away my right to parent and make decisions for the best possible outcome and health of my child!

There is a lot of gray area that the exemptions allow while still keeping every child healthy and vaccination rates high. There is no need to rush to decisions and create a state of emergency, taking away rights, because of a fairly isolated incidence of measles.

I hope you will not support this bill along with me.

Thank you for reading,

Casey Postma