

Dear Representative,

I am writing as an extremely concerned parent. There is a small group of representatives who are aggressively attempting to remove our religious exemption from Connecticut, actively using fear based tactics to quickly push through new legislation; all being done under the guise of a "state emergency" and circumventing the legislative process. This is a huge threat to our parental rights, freedom of choice, and it strips away our informed consent.

In 1986, legislature was passed to shield the vaccine industry from liability of harm. These vaccines are labeled as "biologics" instead of "drugs", and because they are categorized as such, vaccinations do not undergo the lengthy safety testing that drugs require. As you know, many drugs on the market get recalled even after undergoing years of safety testing. How can vaccines not be held to the same standard?

In 1983, the CDC recommended that children receive 23 doses of 7 vaccines by age 18. In 2017, the schedule recommended 69 doses of 16 vaccinations; 50 doses of 14 vaccines are to be received before age 6. And as we speak, more vaccinations are on the way. No one wants to see any disease on the rise, but what about the dramatic rise of all other childhood diseases, life threatening allergies and behavioral issues which directly correlate to the increased vaccination schedule? We are not prepared to deal with the alarming rate of people with illness coming into adulthood. It is unprecedented, yet the focus continues to turn to the profitable vaccine industry.

Currently, true informed consent does not exist. Doctors are supposed to provide you with all information regarding safety, efficacy and risks of vaccination. No one ever offers up vaccine inserts with the information. No doctor has the time. We are expected to come in and receive the shot. If you question anything, you are labeled an anti-vaxxer, a follower of pseudo-science and "one of those parents". Vaccine injury is real. It comes in many forms. It can be minor to life threatening. Vaccine inserts state the presence of risk. There is no other medical procedure that denies informed consent, because where there is risk, there needs to be choice. Vaccines CAN and DO pose risks to many people. Unfortunately, you don't always know if you are that person until you are injured.

There needs to be more safety. There needs to be more transparency. There needs to be conversation.

Texas has just proposed a Senate bill SB2350, calling for stronger safety requirements for vaccinations. Connecticut should demand the same safety and transparency. Parents have a reason to be alarmed. Humans have the right to decide whether or not they will receive a medical procedure. Parents should have the right to make this choice for their children.

Personal belief exemptions were stripped from Connecticut a few years ago and now parents can only use the religious exemption if they do not provide informed consent. The DPH just released data about exemption percentages per school, some of which was inflated and incorrect. As noted, a child who is up to date on all vaccinations could be exempt from just one vaccine, and that child was included in the full exemption rate. This child could have had a reaction to said vaccine, but because medical exemptions have a small window of time to be considered a reaction and many reactions are just labeled a coincidence, medical exemptions are difficult to obtain. This parent would take the religious exemption instead. Not all children included in the report were completely unvaccinated, as certain legislators would like you to

believe. Some schools with higher percentages of exemptions were also much smaller schools, inflating the number even higher and appearing to be more threatening to the community. CT meets the percentages for "herd immunity". The DPH report is a bunch of numbers used to incite fear. This report has just come out and there has been no 3rd party analysis of this data. It was used purely to push along an agenda.

My family has experienced devastating vaccine injury. But this isn't a vaccine debate for me. This is about our right to choose. Our right to informed consent. Our rights as parents to make the best choices for our children. Removing the religious exemption is government overreach. Please fight for the right of your citizens to have informed consent.

Thank you,
A.L.
Westport