

Monday, May 13th, 2019
Removal of Religious Exemption Testimony
Aimee Allaire, Mystic, CT

As a parent, a lifelong Connecticut resident and concerned citizen, I am asking you to uphold our state's religious exemption for schoolchildren and to vote against any changes at all to the exemption or to the vaccine schedule. Forced vaccination does not equal informed consent. It is my personal responsibility as a parent to listen to my conscience, research any medical intervention as thoroughly as I can, talk with my children's pediatrician, and in my case, pray about what is best for my children. I take this responsibility very seriously yet this proposed legislation would punish my family for choices that I have not come to lightly.

The public discourse on the subject of vaccines has turned ugly. People who actually read the medical studies, have witnessed vaccine injury and vaccine failure before their very eyes are dismissed, called names, and told to not question authority. Those who are pro-forced vaccination encourage vitriol and disrespect towards vaccine choice advocates and are creating a dangerous setup in this state. A vote for vaccine changes in Connecticut is a vote against personal freedoms, liberties and responsibilities and it will be the tipping point for many parents in this state. Both my husband and I were born and raised in Connecticut. We both graduated from UConn and our extended families still live here. If the religious exemption is removed, we will be forced to withdraw our straight A student from high school while we plan our out-of-state move.

In my experience, I have come across two types of people who support forced vaccination: those who are not educated on the subject and those who have a financial interest in the pharmaceutical industry. At various times in my own life, I have fallen into both of these categories. It is a painful process to come to terms with one's own ignorance but it is well worth it. As I delved into the subject of vaccines, I hoped to find studies, research and data to back up the safety and efficacy of vaccines but it is not so cut and dry. I found myself left with many more questions, a desire for much more safety testing, and the sinking feeling that an industry that holds no liability most certainly does not have my children's best interest at heart.

My sincere hope is that all legislators before voting on this issue, before assuming that they know all there is to know on the subject of vaccines:

1. Read and understand the product insert for each and every vaccine mandated by the state,
2. Research the rates of disease for the 100 years before each vaccine was introduced,
3. Understand the fraud and conflicts of interest that abound in the vaccine industry,
4. Talk to parents of vaccine-injured children and
5. Earnestly and honestly listen to their constituents who have concerns about vaccine mandates and the removal of the religious exemption.