

ATTENTION: Committee on Children

DATE: 5/13/19

EMAIL: kidtestimony@cga.ct.gov

RE: Possible emergency bill to remove religious exemption

Opposition to remove religious exemption for vaccines

I am speaking today as a mother, a Chiropractor and a CT resident/taxpayer. As a CT resident I am appalled by the way the legislative process has been circumvented and has propagated a false health crisis. As a mother I care about the safety and well-being of my children and would do ANYTHING to protect my kids. As a Chiropractor I took an oath to tell the truth and to do no harm. I strive to educate my patients and help guide them towards better health. When contemplating health choices, we must consider the risk/benefit ratio and what would best suit our own body. I bring this up because like any drug, vaccines come with side effects. When a doctor adds a medication to a patient's list they must make sure there are no interactions. This is not done with vaccines. There is NO research on how 72 doses of vaccines interact with each other and what those side effects could be.

When a child is given a vaccine we don't receive proper informed consent for what the side effects may be. The package insert lists all the possible side effects, but the doctor never reviews this with a patient. We are all blindly given a vaccine with the assumption that there is lifetime immunity to that virus/disease and nothing adverse could ever happen. This could not be further from the truth, as we have many parents that have testified to their child's adverse reactions and even life threatening reactions. Parents are not made aware of all the possible side effects. Since Measles seems to be the propagated health crisis of the moment, I will talk about the side effects to the MMR.

The risk of febrile seizure following the MMR is 1 in 640 versus the risk of febrile seizure following measles infection is 1 in 3,100. The package insert for the MMR clearly lists the possible adverse reactions, some of which are: death, coma, encephalitis, seizures, measles, brain damage, permanent loss of hearing, diabetes, thrombocytopenia, arthritis, etc. There are currently NO screening protocols in place for known susceptibilities to adverse reaction to vaccines, so how would a parent know? These susceptibilities include prematurity, concurrent environmental exposures (such as lead poisoning), subtle genetic mutation, genetic predisposition to seizures, sub clinical infections, primary immunodeficiency, vitamin/nutritional deficiencies, racial differences in immune response, allergies to vaccine ingredients, and more. There is currently NO investigation into reported serious adverse reactions to vaccines to look for susceptibility. So as a parent are we just supposed to play russian roulette and pray that the gun pointing at our child's head shoots a blank? As of January 2, 2019 there have been 1,258 claims filed in the federal Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) for injuries and deaths following MMR vaccination, including 82 deaths and 1,176 serious injuries. If we compare this to actual measles injury and death you can see that the risk is clearly higher for the vaccine.

Dr. Messonnier at the ACIP meeting for the measles epidemic in February 2019 reaffirms this lack of information. When questioned about if MMR vaccine can cause brain encephalitis she responded, "In healthy children MMR vaccine does not cause brain inflammation or encephalitis. There are rare instances of children with very specific underlying problems with their immune system in which the vaccine is contraindicated. In that very specific group of

children there is a rare risk of brain swelling.” She was then questioned if a parent would know if their child was in that category and she responded, “Yes, and that’s why a parent should talk to their Dr.” So, my question is, what kind of testing is being done to determine if a child has this very specific underlying problem with their immune system that would cause brain encephalitis or any other potential reaction to the MMR vaccine? The problem here is, even if such a risk was found, the doctor would still not be able to write a medical exemption for that child. Can you see the problems that we face? There is more going on here than meets the eye. Therefore, the law should remain as is and further investigation should be done.

The real health crisis is that we are not addressing the real problems in the medical system. Answering these real questions is a great start before mandating a possibly unsafe product to every child. Wouldn’t it make more sense to guarantee safety first? Should we protect one part of society while harming another to achieve this presumed safety? So I leave this committee with questions. Please think about the answers before removing our right to a religious exemption. When we think about religion and sacrifice it feels like we are offering up some children for sacrifice only to comply with the religion of vaccinology. How do we pick which children are worth sacrificing? How do we thank all the vaccine injured children for their sacrifice for the greater good?

Because vaccines are not a one size fits all and do come with risk, we must look at these complicated issues before completely removing access to religious exemption. There is no health emergency right now and therefore no rush to make these rash decisions. We must first do no harm. I close with a quote from Representative Linehan from May 3, 2019, “Vaccines, for the most part, are safe and effective”. How do we answer to that, “for the most part”? It is for that reason I ask to oppose removing religious exemption and preserve our first amendment right.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Jacqueline Flynn