

Eva Jimenez, MA Education
Newington, CT

5/12/2019

Dear Connecticut Legislative Body:

My name is Eva Jimenez, and I am a parent of two boys, an educator, and a former Peace Corps volunteer. I had measles as a child, despite receiving the MMR. While serving in a developing country, I also was vaccinated against rabies and yellow fever and promoted education and health in a small village. I support efforts to improve public health, including informational awareness campaigns; mandated home quarantine and/or mask wearing for infected or immunocompromised individuals; and improved access to clean water, sanitation, whole foods, integrative health care, and unbiased scientific research. However, as long as vaccines carry any risk of injury or death; vaccine manufacturing companies are not held liable; and these companies hold power over politicians, medical professionals, and published research; I believe the government of the Constitution State should not restrict religious exemptions to vaccines any further.

Connecticut law already specifies a reasonable protocol for schools with unvaccinated children during an outbreak. Parents of non-immune children with religious exemptions are well aware that their child will stay home from school during a local outbreak of infectious disease.

However, in the current absence of a real health crisis, discriminating against unvaccinated, healthy children for their religious beliefs by removing their right to a public education is unreasonable, wrong, and un-American. Prohibiting students who pose no imminent health threat from attending school would place an unfair burden on families in a state that is already an expensive place to live. Many families would face an impossible choice between staying true to their religious beliefs, moving out of the state, or leaving their only sources of income to homeschool.

Furthermore, the legislature does not hold power over its citizens' bodies. Why would we support the woman's right to choose an abortion, but not support a parent's right to choose how to care for his child's health and body as he and his health providers see fit? Does serving the greater good mean creating a sterile public environment for the sake of the immunocompromised citizens? Does it mean the state chooses to sacrifice the health and lives of those who have the unpredictable potential to suffer a vaccine adverse event, in the name of herd immunity?

I understand the fear of infectious disease. However, please be guided by the facts and ethics, not by fear, money, and politics. I notice that pharmaceutical companies are behind the recent legislative pushes and fear-mongering in the media. Media outlets avoid reporting on vaccine injuries like the plague, risking losing billions of dollars from Big Pharma. Meanwhile Merck, the only supplier of MMR to the US, has been in federal court on fraud charges. Despite protests of parents of vaccine-injured children across the country, legislators are ignoring the testimony of their constituents, and the push to protect and expand the vaccine schedule without adequate safety testing has prevailed. Hundreds of cases of measles get more media and legislative attention than the thousands of deaths from opiates and medical mistakes, the autism epidemic, and the alarming increase in youth anxiety and depression. This country is sicker than it has ever been. The CDC and lawmakers have wasted our taxpayer dollars to create smokescreens instead of improving our health.

I have used my research training from graduate school to examine the studies touted to confirm vaccine safety and effectiveness. While I dispel many popular myths in doing my research, I also raise more questions and concerns over the so called "settled science." As I refuse to take anyone on their word on this issue, I expect you to do the same. Physicians for Informed Consent, under fear of censorship, bring a much-needed counter-argument to the commonly accepted sound bites. Their support for vaccine choice is based only on referenced research in peer-reviewed medical journals and the CDC website. <https://physiciansforinformedconsent.org/measles/vrs/>

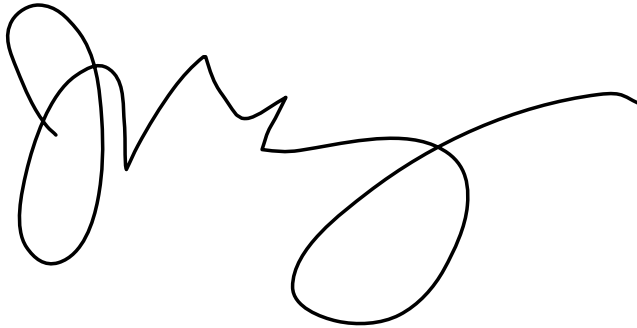
As a teacher and parent, I want our children to be kind and compassionate, to think critically, and to do their personal best. Will you please do the same for me? Search beyond what you have been told. Follow the money and the research. Ask the tough questions. Let us not resort to bullying a minority of people, driven by their personally held religious beliefs and ability to think for themselves. Be open to the many possible solutions to a problem, not just the one supported by the most powerful corporate influence in this country. Support independent research to predict vaccine injury, and pass laws that expand the medical exemption in response to the published results. Support the development of safer vaccines. Support non-pharmaceutical alternatives to improving health. The healthiest people I know have successfully used alternative remedies and healthcare practitioners for years. Support the real health crises that are directly impacting us. Please oppose all legislation that eliminates religious exemptions.

Thank you for your time in considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eva".

Eva Jimenez

A large, stylized handwritten signature in cursive script, likely reading "Eva Jimenez".