In opposition to removing the religious exemption:

One of the things I hear most when people talk about vaccines, especially in regards to the religious exemption, is the word "choice."

We're told that if the religious exemption is removed, we aren't forced to vaccinate because we still have the choice between vaccinating or homeschooling. But if you're a single parent, if both parents work, if you have a child with special needs and so many other common circumstances, what kind of choice is that?

We are told we must vaccinate our kids to protect the immunocompromised because they didn't choose to be too medically fragile to receive vaccines. But our children are being injured by vaccines; what kind of choice is that?

And we are told that we're choosing to put other children in danger if we don't vaccinate when we're trying to protect our own family and stay true to our beliefs; what kind of choice is that?

We didn't choose that vaccines would be required for school.

We didn't choose which vaccines would be required for school.

We didn't choose the ingredients in vaccines.

And we didn't choose for those ingredients to be against our religious beliefs.

We didn't choose for our children to be injured because of vaccines.

We didn't choose for our children to develop life-threatening allergies because of vaccines.

We didn't choose for our children to become the immunocompromised that we're told to protect because of vaccines.

And we didn't choose for our children to die for the "greater good" because of vaccines.

We didn't choose for vaccine manufacturers to be exempt from financial liability when our children are injured by their products.

We didn't choose for Congress to classify vaccine as "unavoidably unsafe" while the masses shout "vaccines are safe and effective."

We didn't choose for the FDA and the CDC to approve and recommend vaccines that have never had double-blind inert placebo studies.

We didn't choose for our doctors to lose funding for their research or their licenses for questioning the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

We didn't choose for our lawyers to be investigated or thrown in jail simply for being vaccine injury lawyers.

And we didn't choose for the biased media to make people terrified of the non-vaccinated.

We didn't choose to be called anti-vaxxers, especially since most of us are ex-vaxxers who learned what the risks are the hard way.

We didn't choose for other parents to bully us and wish our children dead.

We didn't choose to be ridiculed and threatened for our religious beliefs.

And we didn't choose for our data to be released by the Department of Public Health so our neighbors could try to peer pressure us into vaccinating.

We didn't choose to stop vaccinating because celebrities said so. We didn't choose to stop vaccinating because people on social media told us to. We didn't choose to stop vaccinating because it's a trend, a fad or a movement. And we didn't choose to stop vaccinating because it's easy - because I'll tell you, it's not.

Do you think it's a "choice" for us to refuse to vaccinate when we witness our children physically suffer, become seriously ill, or die?

Do you think it's a "choice" for us to refuse to vaccinate a second child when our first child was harmed or died from a vaccine?

And do you think it's a "choice" for us to refuse to vaccinate when countless hours of research and our own experience tells us they're neither safe nor effective?

We didn't choose this. This chose us.

Please choose not to mandate a pharmaceutical product by holding a free public education hostage.

Please choose to support our right to practice our religious freedoms. Please choose to vote no on removing the religious exemption.

Thank you, Jessica Y. Groton