

Testimony for Informational Hearing  
May 13th, 2019

Informational Hearing in Regards to Removal of the Religious Exemption for Immunizations

Good morning, Senators Duff and Slap, and Representatives Ritter, Steinberg and Linehan. My name is Lina Schlotter, and I am against the removal of the religious exemption for immunization. I believe removal of this exemption is a removal of a personal right and freedom that people of the United States, and everywhere should have. People of many religions have personal beliefs, ordained by their gods, dictating ethics that they hold true. Many religions believe that abortion is murder, and using aborted fetus cells and tissue is against their ethics. Other religions believe that cows are sacred, do not believe in their slaughter, and do not support obtaining blood from cattle slaughterhouses to inject into themselves or their children. Other people have religions that dictate that they are vegetarians. Injecting terminated human body parts and slaughtered animal blood into themselves and their family would be contradictory to their beliefs. Having religious freedom was the foundation of this country, and the government should not have the right to take that away. Millions of people have fought, and died, for this privilege and it should not be discarded lightly.

People have the right to protect themselves, and their children, from governments that are heavy handed and overreaching in their mandates. There is no health crisis that warrants this unusual move. Even if an emergency existed, it would make more sense to deal with the crisis itself, without removing the religious exemption. There are only three other states that fail to honor the religious liberty of its citizens regarding immunization. We do not want to be added to that list.

I moved from California because of the government infringement on personal freedom and liberties, and many, many other families are leaving California for those same reasons. It's

bleeding out the educated middle class at rates no one has seen before. Connecticut is also having this problem. Do you want to add one more reason people want to leave this state?

Lastly, I was personally injured when I was vaccinated. I went blind in my right eye (optic neuritis) and formed lesions on my brain within hours of receiving a vaccine. My son had the same reaction, but also was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease from the vaccination. We are not "Anti-Vaxxers," which is a derogatory and slanderous word made up to bully people with a different opinion about a medical procedure. We are "EX- Vaccinators," because we've chosen to stop vaccinations after being directly injured from vaccines, and converting to a particular religion. We still battle with being kicked out of pediatric offices, because even though we've directly been injured, filed VEARS reports, and have medical charts with this information, and say it is against our religious beliefs, the administrators of the offices don't feel that we deserve a medical or religious exemption to stay in their offices. Every doctor that I've personally spoken does not believe we should continue with our last two vaccinations, even regardless of our religious beliefs, but their hands are tied. California has already tried, and failed, at removing the doctor's from making a choice regarding medical exemptions. How does the government know more about my families personal health choices than my doctor?! There is clearly a larger agenda here and not one doctor I've spoke to agrees with it, but they cannot do anything about it. The government is literally taking the doctor's choice and opinion away from them as well. This must be stopped.

Please drop this initiative. Please stand to protect people's freedom of choice and their freedom to follow their personal and religious convictions - particularly their religious convictions. Please stop this gross infringement on religious freedom.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Lina Schlotter