

I am here today to speak in opposition to the proposal to remove the religious exemption for vaccines.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution clearly states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or **prohibiting the free exercise thereof**". Taking away a parent's right to file a religious exemption is prohibiting the free exercise of religion and is therefore, unconstitutional.

Among the many ingredients in vaccines are aborted fetal cells and neurotoxins such as aluminum and formaldehyde. As parents, we should have the right to determine what is injected into our children. But if you eliminate the religious exemption, you are essentially asking me to choose between my religion and my child's right to attend a public school.

I am confused as to why this emergency hearing was called in the first place. Connecticut already has one of the highest vaccination rates in the country, well above the national average.

And while the media has been reporting multiple measles outbreaks – the facts say otherwise. According to a NY Times article published on 4/24/19, there have been zero deaths from the measles in this country. And according to a press release issued by the CT Dept of Public Health on 4/12/19, there have been only THREE confirmed cases of the measles in the state.

Zero deaths in the U.S. and three cases of the measles in the entire state of Connecticut.

Three cases out of a population of 3,573,000 people. *(I tried to calculate a percentage, but it came out to be .00008 of one percentage point or essentially 0%.)*

How do THREE cases of the measles constitute an emergency situation in our state?

Do THREE cases allow you to potentially strip away the constitutionally guaranteed right of freedom of religion and the free exercise thereof?

How is it that Connecticut supports a woman's right to choose yet you are proposing to take away her decision on how to care for her child once he/she is born?

This is an agenda being driven by the pharmaceutical industry and I urge you to consider their financial motives in this. Vaccines are a \$37 Billion dollar industry and there is a lot of money at stake here.

You are placing your faith in an industry that is far from infallible. Let's not forget that it was the pharmaceutical industry that pushed the sale of pain killers that has led to the true health crisis we currently face – the massive rates of opioid addiction.

So why are we letting that same industry convince the public that THREE cases of the measles equals an outbreak?

I have heard several of you state that you are trying to be proactive, that you don't want to wait until this becomes a problem.

That was the same reasoning used to justify placing hundreds of thousands of Japanese-Americans into internment camps during WWII. And history has shown that was the wrong decision too.

So while your intentions may be noble, removing the religious exemption based on 'what might happen' does not justify stripping away our constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Please be strong and let the facts guide your decision – not the pharma industry!

Thank you,

Margaret Kozlark  
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