

My name is Victoria Lawlor. I am a Milford resident, Brown University graduate and pursuing my Masters degree in the health sciences. I am a wife, a mother, a cancer survivor and a lifelong Democrat.

I would like to know where the emergency is that's being used as the rationale for leadership to abuse power and circumvent the legislative process. Five days haven't been given. There isn't even a bill on which we are testifying. There is no emergency here but there is a lot of fear. Governing out of fear and propagating fear is dangerous and irresponsible.

I said that I was a lifelong Democrat, my first job out of college was on Dukakis's presidential campaign. I am amazed that the same people in this party who look at our current president with such loathsome critical eyes are, on this very vaccine issue, using his same bullying and fear tactics. I have read of Nazi Germany and 1950s McCarthyism, but I have never personally had a similar experience until the past several years of vaccination misinformation propaganda and absolute all-in or all-out perspectives presented as the only options. This atmosphere of fear that has been created has made the unvaccinated the newest group of people to be discriminated against. My husband and I now question whether or not we will have to uproot our family entirely because of decisions that you all are making out of fear and not fact. We cannot talk about this issue with friends, neighbors, or even some family who see us as "crazy" and threatening the lives of other people and their children. I have a neighbor who told me she would rather have her child have autism than get the measles. That is crazy but not unexpected when you receive letters from your local health department stating that:

1 in 4 who get measles will be hospitalized – a falsehood in the US as evidenced by US pre-vaccine historical data and current data.

1 in 1000 will die – again a falsehood by at least tenfold in the US as proven by both pre-vaccine and current data

This information is inaccurate, dangerous and irresponsible and because of it, my husband and I live in fear of being threatened by uninformed or misinformed fellow citizens, ostracizing us and our individual liberty. We literally are living in fear each day that we will be exposed – not for doing something wrong, but for having educated ourselves on real data and not subjecting our children to what, Representative Linehan, called "for the most part safe," full vaccine schedule; a schedule that is 20 times larger than when I was a child and 8 times larger than in 1986 when the National Child Vaccine Injury Act removed vaccine manufacturers' liability.

I am asking that we look at the facts together, with objectivity and consider safer vaccines – with greater research, single doses, and smaller scale programs. I am asking for a conversation. There is a middle ground. We all want what is safe for our children and society. Let's find it through facts and not fear.