

Stamford Pediatric Associates, P.C.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

We are writing in favor of Proposed Bill #6158, An Act Concerning the subject of Vaccine Distribution. We are a 10 doctor Pediatric Practice with offices in Stamford and Darien, CT. In January, we became mandated by the state to acquire most vaccines through the State. We were told this mandate was created to vaccinate more children. While we agree that all children should be vaccinated, our vaccination rate was over 95%. We never ran out of vaccines unless there was a nationwide shortage. We are concerned this could happen. The proposed bill asks for choice. Choice will allow practices that want to receive vaccines from the state to do so, but it will also allow practices that were successful vaccinating children through the use of privately supplied vaccine to continue to do so.

We are a small business employing 25 employees. This new requirement is going to force us to make difficult choices going forward including cutting staff hours and layoffs, which will affect our patients. The mandate has significantly increased our operating costs by creating many hours of additional administrative and nursing work. We used to call and order the vaccine and it would be received within 24-48 hours. Now when we place an order we need to give information on what is left in the refrigerator by amount, lot numbers and expiration dates. With 12 different vaccines, this is a time-consuming process. The order takes longer to arrive so more monitoring is required. Additionally, several insurance companies are not processing claims correctly in this new systems therefore creating many hours of follow up. Our practice is required to bear the administrative burden with no additional compensation to offset the additional costs.

Compared to other states, Connecticut requires that vaccines be administered by a nurse. Other states allow medical assistants to administer vaccines. Our state requirement does not allow us to be cost effective by using medical assistants to administer vaccines. We are mandated by the government to follow these rules, yet the government provides us no alternative to run our business efficiently. The additional administrative burden of the state vaccine program is preventing us from pursuing quality improvement initiatives such as Patient Centered Medical Home.

We strongly agree with vaccinating children and taking care of our patients. We have been doing that for more than 40 years. This mandate has changed the way we run our small business to the detriment of our patients.

Sincerely,

Lambros Geotes, MD
on behalf of Stamford Pediatric Associates, P.C.

Andrew Hart, MD

Jennifer Henkind, MD