



THE CENTER FOR
ADVANCED
PEDIATRICS

Comprehensive Care for Infants, Children & Young Adults

*Fellows of American Academy
of Pediatrics*

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Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
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Dear Honorable Committee Members,

It is greatly appreciated that you are all taking the time to assess this critically important issue facing physicians and taxpayers in the State of Connecticut. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend in person and hope this testimony will provide insight into why this problem is of utmost importance to the health of the citizens of the State of Connecticut and the primary care physicians that care for them.

I am writing in SUPPORT to REPEAL the mandate that vaccines in Connecticut only be provided by the state.

As a pediatrician who sees both private insured and government insured children for over 20 years, I believe this mandate will impact the health of children, financially burden their parents, the taxpayers, and ultimately bankrupt the pediatricians who care for them all. Monitoring VFC is an insurmountable task and is why many pediatricians refuse to care for government insured children. The process of vaccine monitoring, storage, and documentation is tedious, onerous and consumes time and resources that are not available both at the private medical office level and the state level. Studies have shown that VFC has a higher cost to maintain and administer than private vaccine purchase. As a result of these impossible physical and monetary obstacles, I suspect more pediatricians will discontinue care for the government insured, as well as be forced to terminate employees to make more monies available.

The higher cost of implementing this program has already affected many Connecticut medical practices. Connecticut medical practices are being squeezed from both sides. It is hard to recruit primary care physicians to our state due to higher taxes, higher cost of housing and the high cost of young physicians starting a family here. On the other end, insurers continue to create ways to push the burden of healthcare costs onto the patient and the physician through high deductible health plans and Health Saving Accounts. Many of our patients' families believe they will save money and then come to realize they cannot afford to pay their doctors when they are now fully responsible for payment. This system leaves the physician to act as moneylender as well as debt collector, further taxing resources already in short supply.

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The VFC system already costs more for physicians to manage and with the additional loss of revenues from non-VFC vaccines, medical practices will not be able to continue to pay nurses to vaccinate our children. In 48 states, lower cost medical assistants can administer vaccines. The insurers have no method in their national systems to account for our higher costs due to inability of medical assistants to give vaccine. Only 2 states disallow medical assistants to give vaccines. New York is the other state and **THEY DO NOT HAVE MANDATORY VACCINE LAWS**. Add up all these costs and private practices are headed for disaster and potentially bankruptcy.

There are other states that have attempted similar VFC programs. North Carolina embarked on the same path and it was a disaster, as the funding ran out to cover the costs as the estimates and monitoring of children needing vaccine was an administrative nightmare. They have since returned to both VFC and private purchase. Washington State is also having similar problems.

We as pediatricians, parents and advocates for our children, request you repeal the weight of this mandate. Why the state in this economic market would want to add the burden, take the risk and add cost to the already overtaxed citizens of this state is unconscionable.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to a favorable outcome for children, their parents, physicians, constituents and the taxpayers of Connecticut.

I would be happy to be contacted for any questions or comments you may have.

Sincerely,

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