

6949

Committee on Public Health
Testimony Against Raised H.B. No. 6949 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD
VACCINATIONS

By Beth Lambert
Simsbury, CT
Submitted March 20, 2015

Senator Terry Gerratana, Representative Matt Ritter and members of Public Health Committee. My name is Beth Lambert, I am a Simsbury, CT resident, an author, a children's health advocate, a parent of three and I am submitting testimony against HB 6949.

I oppose this bill because it is a violation of our First Amendment right to the free expression of religion. It is not clear why anyone should be required to read *"evidenced-based instructional material provided by the Department of Public Health regarding the risks to a child or other children of failing to receive immunizations"* in order to freely practice his or her religious rights. Religion is defined as "any set of beliefs, practices, or ethical values." This definition of religion encompasses the rights of conscience. Our Federal Constitution was designed to ensure that no law impinge upon the free exercise, and enjoyment of religious opinions, or interfere with the rights of conscience. No citizen should have to prove or fight for his or her right to free conscience.

Additionally, this bill would require enforcement, and the additional time and resources of Public Health officials, notaries and school administrators. This does not seem like a necessary or wise use of our tax dollars, especially given the current health crisis in our country where one in two children are diagnosed with a **chronic** (*not infectious*) disease. Perhaps our precious resources would be better spent looking at the environmental factors contributing to the epidemic of chronic inflammatory conditions in American children.

H.B. 6949 looks like an unabashed attempt to violate our First Amendment right to freedom of religion and waste tax payers' dollars. I implore you to oppose it.

Sincerely,

Beth Lambert
Simsbury, CT