

6949

Dear Senator Terry Gerratana, Representative Matt Ritter and members of Public Health Committee.

I am writing to inform you that I oppose HB 6949, string that I understand a medical practice, something that has nothing to do with my religious beliefs. I find it highly disconcerting that this bill seems to violate the First Amendment right to free exercise of religious beliefs.

In addition to the education requirement, parents will not only be forced to sign and notarize a statement that they have reviewed and understand the educational materials presented to them but also that they understand that they are putting their child and others at risk. This declaration is extremely incriminatory and could put them at risk of investigation by the state.

It is my understanding that the state must show a compelling interest in overriding religious freedom. With a 98.53% vaccine compliance rate in the state of Connecticut, which is one of the highest, if not THE highest rate in the country, and an approximate 1% vaccine exemption rate, I do not agree that the state of Connecticut has a compelling reason to override religious exemptions to vaccines.

In today's landscape where the shrinking of human rights seems to be an exponentially growing theme, I urge you to support a strong interest in protecting the individual rights of your constituents. Please consider the limitations on the personal liberties and freedoms of those who exercise their right to exemption based on their strongly held religious beliefs and oppose this bill.

Catherine Ambrose  
Wilton, CT