

In Opposition to HB 5448  
***An Act Requiring Health Care Workers To Be Vaccinated Against Influenza***

Public Health Committee:

Though the intention of this bill may be to safeguard the health of those charged with the care of others, an immunization mandate is highly problematic for several reasons.

Vaccine injuries do occur, the majority of which go unreported. The FDA reports as few as 1% of adverse reactions are ever reported.<sup>1</sup> Medical students testified to Congress, they are instructed not to report adverse events<sup>2</sup>, though it's federal law. The CDC estimates that of the 30,000 adverse reactions reported yearly using the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) 10 – 15% are serious, involving *hospitalization, permanent disability, life-threatening illness or death*.

Vaccine manufacturers are **exempt** from any liability. In 1986 the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Act (**NVICA**) was passed creating the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. This little-known, non-juried vaccine court is where vaccine-injured persons file petitions that may eventually be heard by a Special Master. It takes *up to a decade* for a case to be heard, and less than 25% of those qualifying for a hearing actually receive compensation. Despite these barriers, the program has awarded over 3 billion dollars since 1989 - a significant amount considering the slim chance of a settlement, for a problem which does not exist, according to popular media opinion. *It is dangerous to exempt any manufacturer from liability*. There is no impetus to assure safety.

As part of your consideration, read manufacturers' inserts, research possible side effects and make inquiry of all ingredients contained in vaccines. Some influenza vaccine injuries include: Guillain-Barre Syndrome, shingles, seizures, neuropathy, rheumatoid arthritis and Bell's palsy. What will you say to the person you legislate into Guillain-Barre Syndrome? If the State of Connecticut mandates vaccines, will the State of Connecticut assume liability for vaccine injury?

Lastly, but of the highest significance is that vaccine mandates directly assault our freedom of choice, freedom of religion and civil liberties. These alone comprise sufficient reason to shun vaccine mandates.

I strongly urge you to reject this bill. Please respect our rights, our freedoms, our religious beliefs, and our human right to protect ourselves from possible harm. Please OPPOSE HR 5448. Thank you.

Melissa Talarico

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<sup>1</sup> Less than 1%, according to Barbara Fisher, citing former FDA Commissioner David Kessler, 1993, JAMA, Statement of the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC), Hearing of the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, "Compensating Vaccine Injuries: Are Reforms Needed?" September 28, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Jane Orient, M.D., Director of the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons, "Mandating Vaccines: Government Practicing Medicine Without a License?" 1999.