

6949

Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH
Testimony Against Raised H.B. 6949 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD
VACCINATIONS

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Submitted March 21, 2015

Senator Terry Gerratana, Representative Matt Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Ashley Beauregard. I am a concerned parent and I am writing testimony against H.B. 6949

I oppose this bill because it violates the First Amendment right to the free exercise of religious beliefs. Parents should not be compelled to sign an incriminating statement in order to claim their legal right to religious exemption. H.B. 6949 requires parents to sign a notarized document stating that they understand the risks of not vaccinating their child, information provided by the department of health, and stating that they are putting their child and other children at risk. How does an understanding of the perceived risk information provided have any bearing on the right to religious freedom? The first amendment upholds free exercise of religion. No legal precedence exists advocating the forcing any person to sign a notarized affidavit with the expression of their specific religious beliefs in order for them to freely exercise those beliefs. I am concerned as to what purpose the notarized statement may be used for in the future and whether it will be used against parents in legal proceedings. It is a violation of the fifth amendment to compel a person to be a witness against himself. This notarized document is requiring a person to sign an incriminating statement attesting that they are putting their child and other children at risk. If they do not sign this, then their right to religious freedom is denied. What will be done with these documents and who will have access to them? Will they be public and if so does that violate HIPPA?

Our constitution protects freedom of religion. If we start selectively removing these freedoms for the perceived "greater good of society" are we still upholding the Constitution of United States of America?

I thank you for your time.
Ashley Beauregard