



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

February 22, 2017

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
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Senate Bill 840 - An Act Concerning The Department Of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Immunization Rates

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports Senate Bill 840, which would allow the Department to provide unidentifiable, aggregate data regarding immunization rates for each public and private school in Connecticut to the general public and schools. The Department would like to thank the Public Health Committee for raising the Department's bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

Currently, each school is required to complete and submit to DPH an annual immunization report. The report contains aggregated information such as the number of vaccine exempt students, the number who have completed a vaccine series, and the number who have not completed a vaccine series. No personally identifiable information on students is reported to the Department. DPH receives only total numbers for each data category.

As vaccine exemption rates increase nation-wide, there is increasing interest from parents, school administrators, and the media regarding the information collected in the survey. To date, DPH has been restricted from sharing school-level information.

DPH currently posts statewide and county-level data to the Department's web site at: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3136&Q=556186&dphNav=|46941>. State and county-level information does not provide the public with the granularity to gauge the vulnerability of an individual school to vaccine preventable disease, at a level where disease transmission occurs. This data would help parents and guardians work closely with schools to ensure that their child's safety concerns and health care needs are met. Release of school level information may stimulate discussion and targeted education in schools with high exemption rates, and could prompt local administrators to partner more closely with the State Department of Education (SDE) to help families become compliant with school immunizations required by law for attendance.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

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