

Testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 7005

Esteemed members of the committee,

I request that you OPPOSE HB 7005: An Act Prohibiting the Acknowledgement of Parental Statements Concerning Religious Objections to Vaccination by School Nurses and Permitting Members of the Clergy to Acknowledge Such Statements.

The mere request that a statement objecting to vaccination be acknowledged by anyone other than the parent(s) is a violation of privacy and is completely unnecessary, but yet it has already passed into state law. Since school nurses are already privy to the information contained on a religious exemption form, most parents feel most comfortable having them produce the unnecessary acknowledging signature. Therefore it is very upsetting that school nurses be removed from the list. I personally would not wish to have anyone else on that list have knowledge of my child's personal health information. To be asked to do so is harassment in my opinion.

The addition of clergy is even more alarming and seems to be an attempt to turn the simple acknowledgement of a parent's signature into a type of authorization from the clergy of the objection being founded in religious beliefs. Many people have religious beliefs with no connection to clergy. The addition of clergy to this list is an open path to requiring a clergy authorization of the religious exemption. The acknowledgement on it's own is a violation of privacy of children's personal health information when viewed by anyone other than the school nurse. The addition of clergy is alarming as if it were to become the only option for acknowledgment it would discriminate against people who have no clergy attached to their religious beliefs as well as an invasion of privacy.

Some of our Connecticut lawmakers have made it abundantly clear both verbally and in writing to their constituents that they intend to have the religious exemption from vaccination removed from Connecticut law. It can be viewed on their websites and/or social media accounts. We are being threatened to have the right of an education stripped from our children for noncompliance with an invasion of our beliefs and our bodies. This education is one we all pay for with our tax dollars.

The American Academy of Pediatrics does not have the authority to recommend the removal of our constitutional rights. Please do the right thing and OPPOSE this bill which will undoubtedly lead to religious discrimination and the removal of our individual, parental and religious rights.

Thank you,

Diana Bump
Ellington, CT