

Good morning,

I am writing to request that you oppose this and all proposed bills attempting to eliminate our right to a religious exemption from vaccination. I recognize that this is a high profile topic and that the community appears divided on this as it relates to vaccines. I fear that the increase in vaccine debates in the media and those strongly in favor of vaccinating will use this as a platform to initiate and continue an attack and subsequently erode my religious freedoms. However, it is how it relates to the direct attacks on religious freedom that I am asking you to oppose the bill. This is an issue of parental rights and religious freedom to practice without fear and without discrimination.

It is possible to believe in vaccines, but to be against mandates that remove religious freedoms. Requiring clergy to sign for a parent discriminates against families that practice religion without a clergy, or that chose to foster their beliefs at home instead of in a church.

There is a hearing on Thursday 2/7 at 1:00 p.m. in room 1B of the LOB on HB 7005. We are asking you to OPPOSE this bill which removes the school nurse as one of the people who can acknowledge the religious exemption and adds clergy to that list. This is but one step in the direction of infringement on religious freedom.

In addition, it treads on a person's ability to maintain privacy of medical history and belief systems.

Medical professionals must honor religious freedom to make health care decisions even when doing so results in death or decline of the patient. ( some religious beliefs prohibit use of any blood or blood products in medical care, even when it could be lifesaving). Government should not have the right to overstep the right of a parent to act in accordance with his or her religious beliefs for history her children.

Thank you.

Rebecca Durfee