

Dear Children's Health Committee Members,

I am writing and asking that you oppose bill **HB-7005**:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARENTAL STATEMENTS CONCERNING RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO VACCINATIONS BY SCHOOL NURSES AND PERMITTING MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY TO ACKNOWLEDGE SUCH STATEMENTS”.

There is no reason to take off the option of having a school nurse's signature on this exemption. I have never even heard of a nurse not wanting to sign one. Some religions exist without a formal clergy. Requiring a clergy's signature to prove a religious exemption for vaccinations for the people that believe in these particular religions is discrimination and infringement upon religious freedoms. It also causes violation of HIPAA laws. We should not have to have any member of any church prove our religious beliefs, nor should we have to reveal our medical information to anyone.

Here is an example of how unconstitutional this bill would be on the federal level, and it is guided from the First Amendment. On a US Supreme Court level in *Frazee V. Illinois Dept. of Security*, 489 U.S. 829, it was found that a state may NOT deny an exemption simply because a person is not a member of a formal religious organization.

According to Sec 20. of the Connecticut State Constitution, it says: No person shall be denied the equal protection of the law nor be subjected to segregation or discrimination in the exercise or enjoyment of his civil or political rights because of *religion*, race, color, ancestry or national origin.

HB-7005, if passed, would force us into segregation and discrimination and remove our religious freedoms. This is scary! Why are we going backwards in time by removing rights that have been established since the founding of this country? Connecticut has a very high level of vaccination rates. There is no reason to change it and with only a handful of families that have an exemption, it seems unwarranted. To tamper with our religious freedoms is basically government tyranny and the bill would not line up with the federal or state constitutions.

Please keep our religious freedoms intact, and freedom of choice, which have been with us since the birth of this nation, by opposing this bill.

Thank you for your service, time and attention to this matter,

Donna F.
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