

Dear Esteemed Members of the Children's Committee,

I am submitting my testimony in opposition to HB-7005: AN ACT PROHIBITING THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PARENTAL STATEMENTS CONCERNING RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO VACCINATION BY SCHOOL NURSES AND PERMITTING MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY TO ACKNOWLEDGE SUCH STATEMENTS. School nurses were added to the form to protect the sensitive medical information of students. Many parents prefer to have their school nurse sign the forms so that families are not unnecessarily allowing access to private medical information. Removing that option and adding yet another individual outside the school system is just another invasion of privacy and infringement on rights. Another major issue with this bill is the unconstitutional nature of a clergy signature. This discriminates against religions who have no overseeing "clergy". There are many reasons why I find this bill distasteful and inappropriate. However in the effort to remain brief, I would like to add that the current form is acceptable as it stands and there are only a small number of families who utilize it. Connecticut has one of the highest vaccination rates in the country. Any and all bills to amend or eliminate the religious exemption are harassment and a colossal waste of precious time and resources which would be better spent on any number of more pressing and important matters. Thank you for your service, time, and attention.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herrick