

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to you today to ask that you prevent 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 from passing.

The first point I would like to make with regard to this legislation is that it is unconstitutional. The first amendment of the United States Constitution protects my right to practice my religion. It is my understanding that there has always been an exemption to vaccination based upon the religious beliefs of an individual and that two to three years ago that exemption was changed to require signature authorization. I feel uncomfortable having anyone have to authorize my signature for mine or my future child's exemption to any vaccination, especially my priest.

As a woman, I have the right to protect my body by choosing whether or not to have a medical procedure done. As someone who plans on becoming a mother in the near future, I should have the right to protect my child in the same way.

The removal of the school nurse as an authorized individual to review my signature places a burden on individuals who may be apprehensive about sharing their private health information. Nurses and other healthcare professionals are required to keep such information private. This is not the case with the other "authorities" who may witness signatures.

I hope you can see how very strong my feelings are on this matter. I urge you not to pass this bill as it does not benefit the citizens of Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jaclyn McInerney