

February 7, 2019

Dear Members of the Committee on Children,

I am writing to urge you to OPPOSE 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.

I strongly oppose the removal of school nurses from the CT Religious Exemption document. As a mother, I believe parents should continue to have the option to utilize their school nurse to acknowledge this document to protect their children's medical information which is very personal and private. To my understanding, if this violates a specific nurse's beliefs, he/she may decline acknowledging this type of document, however I strongly believe it should not be removed as an option completely.

In addition, adding a clergy member as a person who is able to recognize a Religious Exemption is completely unnecessary. A religious exemption is put into place to protect people of various beliefs. It is used by a very small percentage of Connecticut families. Adding this type of personnel feels inappropriate and discriminatory.

It is very important to me and other Connecticut families that CT Religious Exemption is kept in place the way that it is. Taking any rights away from our families is a violation of the separation of church and state.

Thank you for your time,

Juliana Messina

Bethel, CT