

February 6th 2019

Dear Representative Lenehan, Representative Elliot and all members of the Children's Committee,

I am writing with great conviction in opposition of 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 implore you to please decline this bill. For one, HB-7005 would be a clear breach of privacy according to the Supreme Court who states - "a parent or guardian has the right to make all decisions regarding child rearing and education without needing any acknowledgement by a stranger or the State." We as citizens should not be forced to have to expose our children's or our own medical records to any person who is not a medical professional or that of medical purposes -just to be able to adhere to our religious beliefs. By allowing a nurse to sign an acknowledgment of religious exemption, we are not only protecting sensitive, private medical information, we are exercising our rights as citizens in the form of- freedom of religion.

As it is stated in the Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution;

" Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof".

This separation of church and state is part of the **fundamental core our country was built upon.** And if this bill was passed, would be absolute discrimination to say there is a difference between a child who has a medical exemption versus a child with a religious exemption. In addition, to require a clergy member to sign would also be forcing people to adhere to a christian based religion, as many religions do not have clergy. This would violate a persons right's even further by forcing them to adhere to a specific religious practice.

Lastly, there is no apparent reason to change the current religious exemption. In fact, it would seem questionable to propose such a bill, considering how unconstitutional it is. Connecticut's CURRENT religious exemption is constitutional and protects our rights. Please do not allow Connecticut residents to become oppressed by this alarmingly, unlawful bill. How can the state dictate our rights as people and as parents in regards to religion? How could any representative of Connecticut even contemplate a bill that will seize our right's as citizens for a cause that does not even need revision?

Thank you for your service and your time,

Amy Mrowka,
East Hampton, CT