

I am writing to express my opposition to 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.

I find many issues with this legislation. While adding clergy as an option for acknowledgment of the religious exemption sounds like it may be helpful to parents, it violates the right to privacy regarding medical records, particularly when the religious exemption requirements are misunderstood. This could lead to the requirement of a clergy signature which is unconstitutional. It is imperative that one understand that parents have not been asking for this option when using the religious exemption and many do not want this option since it would require the clergy to have access to private medical information.

The second concern I have with this bill is removal of the school nurse acknowledgment. This is an issue because the school nurse is a logical acknowledgment for many families. The nurse accessing this information would not violate the student's private health information.

This bill is concerning as it approaches a topic very close to my heart - the right to express all aspects of my religious beliefs freely. It seems as though it is aimed at limiting use of the religious exemption which violates my constitutional right to practice my religion. It makes me very uncomfortable to think that I may need to alter my beliefs because of government influence.

Sincerely,  
Marybeth Orłowski