

Dear Children's Committee,

I live in Colchester, Connecticut, and I support HB7005 to have vaccine exemptions require approval from a religious or other official. I am privy to several parenting Facebook groups, where parents regularly encourage each other to opt out of vaccines by "just claiming religious exemption". Most do not truly have a religious opposition to vaccines, but rather are basing their decision not to vaccinate on false information, wide spread myths, and the belief that they know more about vaccines than doctors and scientists. Vaccines are an important part of public health and contribute to significant reduction of serious childhood illnesses. I am very concerned about the growing number of children who are not vaccinated in Connecticut, and nationwide. I hope in requiring exemptions to be approved by a religious official, it will reduce the number of people abusing the exemptions based on their own personal opinion, instead of a true religious belief.

Sincerely,
Erin Verruso