

Dear Children's Committee,

My name is Terra Volpe. I live in New Fairfield, CT.

I am writing in support of HB7005 to allow vaccine exemptions require approval from clergy and remove nurses from the list.

I have first hand knowledge of parents abusing the religious exemption option so they did not have to vaccinate their children. Several years ago I was spending time with a few moms from Sherman and they were casually chatting about how they had done just that. They leveraged the religious exption to ensure their children could attend school while NOT vaccinating them. They lied to manipulate the system. One of these families attended preschool with my oldest child. It bothered me enough that I brought it to the attention of the director of the school. She was obviously aware of the situation, however, she told me there was nothing she could do. Her hands were tied.

Several years later, in 2014, I delivered my second child. When she was under a year old, there was a measles outbreak in our part of the country. For several months I was unable to vaccinate her because she was too young. Normally, the mmr vaccination is given at two years. However, due to the outbreak, doctors changed the vaccination protocol and started immunizing children as young as one year, during that time. As soon as my daughter turned one, I vaccinated her.

Think about this. There are people in our communities, abusing the exepmtion sysytem to not immunize their children, which contributes to outbreaks, which then makes it necessary for doctors to vaccinate children up to a year earlier than generally recommended. A small group of people, should not be given a pathway to abuse a system that has such big consequences for the rest of the population. And school nursres should not have to be put in a situation where that is happening.

For this, reason and also because I have first hand knowledge that parents are abusing religious exemptions to not vaccinate their children, I fully support HB7005 and ask that all members of the children's committee vote in favor of this bill

Sincerely,  
Terra Volpe