

Dear Children's Committee members,

I understand that HB 7005 has been raised in your committee:

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 am addressing the bill as written. The current law is more than adequate and acceptable. One should ask, what would be the benefit of any change? There is absolutely no benefit to the state or its citizens. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

I am concerned about the confidentiality of certain health care information being shared unintentionally. To omit the school nurse is unnecessary. I trust my nurse and other nurses to hold my children's records in confidentiality, since the nurses follow HIPAA/FERPA laws, whereas the others that are on the list do not adhere to the laws. All of the nurses that I have asked over the years never had an issue with signing the exemption form. This information is sensitive and should remain private. There is not one compelling reason to remove school nurses as signatories. This addresses government overreach.

As far as adding clergy to the option to acknowledge is troublesome and unnecessary. My religious creed belongs to my family and me, and I am not sure why any clergy member needs to verify this on a health form. Why do I need to reveal medical information to execute my religious freedom? This acknowledgement has a chilling effect on free exercise of religious liberty. A violation of the separation between Church and State.

The First Amendment guarantees freedoms concerning religion, expression, assembly, and the right to petition. "The Free Exercise Clause reserves the right of American citizens to accept any religious belief and engage in religious rituals. Free-exercise clauses of state constitutions which protected religious "[o]pinion, expression of opinion, and practice were all expressly protected" by the Free Exercise Clause." (Cornell Law School)

This bill is completely inappropriate, unwarranted and excessive. **OPPOSE HB 7005.**

Respectfully,
Chris W.
103rd District