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February 16, 2021

Liberty of Conscience

Strong Opposition to Remove Religious/Moral Exemption (HB 6423, SB 568)

I speak in strong opposition to remove or gradually eliminate the religious exemption to vaccinate, and the reasons are many. Let me first say, that I am not what the media has unfairly described as an “anti-vaxer”. My two children have both received vaccines. My son, now 20, suffers from neurological impairment after his scheduled vaccine cocktail woefully inflicted sickness and seizure. The hospital explained that resulting brain damage may show itself gradually, over time, and developmentally. And it painfully has. You don’t allow me the time it takes to describe the hardship, the treatments, the cost out of pocket, my son’s own struggles because his brain is permanently affected. I had not even heard of a vaccine compensation fund until the last hearings...So you might understand why my I choose wisely the vaccines administered to each of my children, not receiving all and certainly not on big pharma’s schedule. I make those decisions with careful research, and consult with more than one doctor on the matter before giving them to my children, and I consider the fragile health of each individual child. That is my right, and that is my duty as a parent. Time prevents me from sharing more on this point even though I wish I could give you a glimpse of how difficult it has been to raise a child with the brain impairment resulting from regular vaccination. Other parents have done a thorough job explaining this to you during previous hearings...

So I will use the remainder of my time to tell you something you may not know. I am here in opposition to removing liberty of conscience here in the Constitution State. Connecticut is already a very highly taxed and regulated state. In fact, we pay high taxes on education even though I have had to homeschool my kids and pay all my educational expenses out of pocket. Now this proposal would mean they also could not attend college in CT if they chose to refuse certain vaccines. Connecticut is giving families far too many reasons to leave than to stay. And compelling a tiny sector of the population to take every vaccine marketed is yet another reason to leave.

I belong to a network of Community Health Advocate Trainers. Not long ago, we were recognized with a beautiful certificate signed by this governing body and presented to us by Senator Anwar for our work to promote health and wellness. In fact, in 2018 Senator Anwar spoke at a graduation of some of our members, and applauded our work to identify and mitigate diseases. We take the time to understand the principles of health and to teach others things that big pharma won't. Some of these things are that many of the top diseases Americans face are related to lifestyle and are indeed reversible. In fact, we have health-promoting lifestyle centers all over this country that have been reversing (I dare say, curing) diabetes, hypertension, and other health conditions for decades. Will big pharma or even your personal doctor tell you that? Rarely, in fact they usually tell you that you must "manage your condition with medication(s) for the rest of your life. This false "healthcare" is not reserved to those diseases. Many CT residents suffer from numerous conditions that are "managed" with pharmaceuticals that can be cured with implementing health promoting measures. I am talking about cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, autoimmune conditions, cancer, many infectious diseases, the flu, pneumonia, and yes, even covid. Our lifestyle facilities have been proving it for decades, research has been demonstrating that it is true for over 40 years in the

NIH studies Adventist Health Study, Adventist Health Study 2, Adventist Health Study 3.

You see, I am a Seventh-Day Adventist Christian. We number in the millions all over the world. We believe that taking care of our own bodies, and others is part of the work that Jesus did, and therefore it is part of our work as well. We understand certain Biblical health principles and allow them to guide our lifestyle. This has yielded notable health benefits that were so significant, National Geographic has given a lot of attention over the last ten years with their longevity research. In fact, journalist Dan Buettner wrote *The Blue Zones: 9 Lessons for Living Longer from the People who Live the Longest* about people who live the longest, strongest lives in the world. The only people group that he found in North America living long and strong are Seventh-Day Adventists, with statistically fewer diseases and greater longevity. The reason is our God, our lifestyle, and our health principles. Want proof? The NIH Adventist Health Studies solely focus on only 1 health habit, our nutrition, yet we live by 8-10 principles that have for over 150 years have stood out as significant to prevent and even reverse many diseases.

Amidst a global pandemic you may feel the urgency to “do something” and may honestly believe that mandatory, scheduled vaccination without exemption will result in greater public health. I am here to tell you that is not always the case. In the case of smallpox yes. But with many of the mandatory vaccines the so called vaccine “cure” is worse than the cause. Making vaccination mandatory restricts the freedom to choose what is best for the health of each family. Mandatory vaccination makes this governing body and big pharma the “experts” on family health, which neither clearly are. Remember, Big Pharma and most doctors do not ever say that heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and hypertension are curable conditions, yet our lifestyle facilities have consistently demonstrated the contrary, and is supported by tons and tons of research (see AHS 1,2, & 3, see Weimar

NEWSTART, see Hutchinson Theological Seminary during 1918 pandemic, see Adventist Health on [NutritionFacts.org](https://www.nutritionfacts.org), see How Not to Die and How to Survive During a Pandemic by Dr. Michael Gregor, see Dr. Niel Nedley, Dr. David DeRose, and Dr. Wes Youngberg),

Yet, I know that fears have been flamed by covid-19 for good reason. I know there is an urgency to “do *something*”. Within our Adventist medical network (AMEN) We have doctors who have been demonstrating that implementing health principles at critical times can even yield significant outcomes for survival even amidst covid-19, and this is not the first time. During the pandemic flu of 1918-1920, Seventh-Day Adventists (and maybe others) implemented what we understand as health and hygiene principles to treat people infected with this deadly disease. We operated health sanitariums, as well as home health care as we do all over the world today. In 1918 the care given by Adventist sanitariums included administering fresh air, sunlight, prescribed rest, targeted nutrition, prayer, and use of water internally and externally with the use of regular hydrotherapy (hot/cold treatments) specifically chest fomentations. The result was significantly higher survival rate, better than that found in hospitals at the time and even higher than the survival rate in army hospitals, which was considered to be the best care at the time. This was not an isolated occurrence. I raise these examples to demonstrate to you that there are effective means to improve public health. They are not at all promoted by the medical establishment and definitely not by the pharmaceutical industry. And I implore this body to rather support public health by seeking these paths, rather than to forcibly restrict services to those who do not choose Big Pharma’s prescription for “managing disease”.

Let me give you a second example. During the pandemic of 1918-1920 an Adventist college in Minnesota called The Hutchinson Theological Seminary was stricken with half of their student body and staff becoming infected with the flu.

Quickly, they implemented the health principles cited above, including prescribed rest and fresh air even after symptoms subsided. The result was that not one of them died. In fact, they even experienced a quicker recovery time than reported elsewhere! The point is that once we truly understand the principles of (Biblical) health then we are better able to prevent and treat diseases. And it is this same understanding of these principles that make me a citizen, a parent, a Health Advocate that does not believe that the schedule of vaccines promotes public health. In fact, on the contrary.

Whereas certain vaccines, like smallpox or polio, has done great good for public health, the growing schedule of vaccines has done the opposite-imposing a toxic load onto the fragile neurological systems of infants and children, and leaving families like mine with the burden and hardship of dealing with a lifelong sentence imposed. What recourse is there? How do we prevent impairing the minds of our children with what is told is “for the public good”? The first step, is to allow citizens, parents the choice. Let us choose whether a vaccine is right for our family’s health. Do not restrict services from those who believe otherwise. It is not the right of this governing body, nor of medical professionals with relationships to big pharma to impose decisions with such risky outcomes on families who care about their health. Restricting access to education and then onto other services because we are not negligent of health, instead we are in fact diligent about health, which is why we do not choose the vaccination schedule or may eliminate vaccines altogether.

You may wonder what this method would mean for herd immunity, and feel pressured to vaccinate due to covid. Yet the covid vaccines are not for children, and therefore will not contribute to herd immunity in a population that includes a large number of children. So this argument to remove the religious exemption in order to somehow improve herd immunity would not apply to covid, and in fact it does

not apply to other diseases in CT either, because the number of families in CT that actually use the religious exemption is a small number. And out of that number, the majority are families that partially vaccinate, or use a graduated schedule to vaccinate with less of a toxic load. So allowing the religious/moral exemption to stand would NOT inhibit herd immunity. So this bill does not improve public health and should be discarded.

Lastly, this is the Constitution State. It is unfathomable to me, as a military-serving family, that while serving overseas, our liberties are being eroded here at home in CT. This state, of all states, should not be debating whether the most fundamental of freedoms is valuable enough to protect. The liberty of conscience, whether religious or moral conviction, ought not be threatened by this body. It is not American, nor does it promote the common good. This practice that is in question doesn't even promote good public health! There are other methods that, together with medical advancements, CAN promote public health in CT. I am happy to work together with you on making CT a healthier place to live and work. In fact, my family devotes a large amount of our time volunteering time and resources to do just that. Health is personal. For me, it is very closely Connecticut with my Christian faith. Because of my faith, I understand that I am created in the image of God, and I make lifestyle decisions with that in mind. I have mentioned that the result has even been scientifically demonstrated in NIH studies to result in better health and longevity. So I believe that the Creator alone, and not this legislature has the wisdom to dictate what promotes personal health. This is personal, affecting the very fundamental right to religious liberty. This body must tread softly on issues of religion and freedom of conscience, and not dictate mandatory and many unnecessary vaccinations that consistently harm. Vote down this measure. Preserve liberty, preserve health.

