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State of Connecticut
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ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
HOUSING COMMITTEE
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Testimony
Sen. Rob Sampson
Public Health Committee
March 11, 2026

Opposition:
S.B. 450: An Act Concerning the Standard of Care for Immunization

Co-Chairs Anwar and McCarthy Vahey, Vice-Chairs Belton, Marx, and McCrory, Ranking Members Somers and Klarides-Ditria, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to S.B. 450.

At its core, this bill continues a troubling trend we see far too often in Connecticut: the steady expansion of government authority over deeply personal medical decisions that should remain between patients and their doctors.

Health care is not one-size-fits-all. Every individual has unique medical circumstances, unique risk factors, and unique family considerations. These decisions should be guided by physicians, patients, and parents, not dictated by state policy designed here in Hartford.

Yet proposals like this send a very clear message that the majority in this building does not trust citizens to make responsible medical decisions for themselves or their families.

Parents in particular have both the right and the responsibility to make informed decisions about their children's health. Those conversations should take place between families and trusted medical professionals, not be predetermined by evolving government mandates.

What makes this bill especially concerning is the mechanism it creates to expand government authority even further. Under this proposal, the Commissioner of Public Health would be empowered to establish the statewide "standard of care for immunization," and those standards could be revised at any time without going through the normal regulatory process that provides transparency, legislative oversight, and public accountability.

In other words, a single state official would be given broad authority to define and continually redefine vaccination policy for the entire state, without the normal rulemaking safeguards that apply when agencies create binding standards.

That is not how good government is supposed to work.

Public health matters. No one disputes that vaccines have played an important role in modern medicine.

But public health policy must also respect individual liberty, informed consent, and the fundamental right of citizens to make their own medical decisions.

Unfortunately, too many proposals coming from this building treat personal medical autonomy as an obstacle to be managed rather than a fundamental right to be respected.

When government expands its authority too far into personal health decisions, it does not strengthen public trust. It erodes it.

People do not respond well when government officials presume they know better than families and physicians about what is best for an individual patient.

And that is exactly the direction this bill moves Connecticut.

Residents of this state should not have to worry that deeply personal medical decisions will increasingly be dictated by evolving state policy rather than thoughtful conversations with their own doctors.

Free citizens deserve better than that.

A free society respects the ability of individuals and families to make informed choices about their own health and their own bodies.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to reject this proposal.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Sampson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Sampson
State Senator - 16th District