

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass with Amendments to the A-Engrossed Measure and Be Printed B-Engrossed

Signers of the Report: Sen. Ferrioli and Sen. Starr

Prepared By: Lori Brocker, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 5/29

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Modifies required documentation to be submitted to school administrator for opting out of immunizations. Changes “statement” to “document”. Specifies document must have signature from health care practitioner verifying that parent reviewed information about risks and benefits of immunization or include certification verifying parent completed vaccine education module approved by Oregon Health Authority. Allows parent to submit signed affidavit indicating child has not been immunized because immunization conflicts with parent’s sincerely held religious belief. Makes certain other technical changes. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Impact of immunizations on public health
- Religious and philosophical reasons to decline immunizations
- Parental rights and responsibilities related to child’s health
- Religious exemption provisions related to immunizations
- Amendments
- Non-medical exemption rate in Oregon
- Options to satisfy documentation available for persons declining immunization on behalf of children

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE MINORITY AMENDMENT: Allows parent to submit signed affidavit indicating child has not been immunized because immunization conflicts with parent’s sincerely held religious belief. Makes certain other technical changes.

BACKGROUND: According to the Oregon Public Health Division, for the last decade, Oregon’s non-medical exemption to the school immunization rate for kindergartners has increased from less than 2 percent in 2001 to 5.8 percent in 2012. In some counties, the rate of non-medical exemption is as high as 12 percent. Oregon has the highest non-medical exemption rate for one or more immunizations in the United States, and some Oregon schools have an exemption rate as high as 70 percent.

Senate Bill 132B specifies if a parent does not want a child immunized due to religious belief, the parent may satisfy the requirement for documentation by submitting an affidavit indicating that a child has not been immunized because immunization conflicts with the sincerely held religious beliefs of the parent.