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In Opposition of SB 442:

Relating to submission of information necessary to decline immunizations; declaring an emergency.

Before the Senate Committee on Health Care, February 18, 2015, 3pm

Health Care Committee Members:

I write in opposition to SB 442 because requiring more parents to take the vaccine education module does not have a direct and logical impact on the “emergency” being declared in the title of the bill.

I have many thoughts and opinions about the subjects at hand. However, when I reflected on what my most useful contribution would be to this Committee, I came to a focus point with information about the brain that I use every day as a parent and in my work as an educator. Let me explain.

Researchers studying neurobiology have discovered that we have lower brain regions that focus primarily on assessing threat as a means of survival. We also have a functionally separate higher brain region that is responsible for problem-solving, empathy, morality, and the ability to choose a response (while the lower brain can only react).

This bill, by declaring an emergency, is drawing on the fear of threat and thereby activating a LOT of primitive brain regions – on both sides. Let’s look at some data from the CDC about the proposed emergency, which is not specified in the notice of the bill but is assumed to reference the recent measles cases in Disneyland.

According to a recent CDC Health Advisory<sup>1</sup>:

“To date, 8 (15%) case-patients were hospitalized. Of the 52 outbreak-associated cases, 28 (55%) were unvaccinated, 17 (31%) had unknown vaccination status, and 6 (12%) were vaccinated. Of the 6 cases vaccinated, 2 had received 1 dose and 4 had received 2 or more doses. Among the 28 unvaccinated cases, 5 were under age for vaccination.”

A. Eight out of 52 (15%) were hospitalized.

B. Unvaccinated cases: 28. Subtract the five who were not of age to be vaccinated: 5. Total unvaccinated cases of persons of age to be vaccinated: 23.

Vaccinated cases: 6. Total cases of age to be vaccinated & of which the CDC has vaccine status information: 29. **Percentage vaccinated: 20.7%, or 1 in 5.**

1. CDC Health Alert Network, January 23, 2015; <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00376.asp>

2. ([http://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi\\_circulars/m/mmr\\_ii/mmr\\_ii\\_pi.pdf](http://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi_circulars/m/mmr_ii/mmr_ii_pi.pdf))

3. (<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/health/2015/02/16/senator-seeks-toughen-oregons-vaccine-exemption-law/23526837/>)

One more piece of information I'll introduce from within the five pages of contraindications, warnings, precautions, and adverse reactions on the Merck MMR II package insert<sup>2</sup>: "As for any vaccine, vaccination with M-M-R II may not result in protection in 100% of vaccinees."

*Am I understanding correctly that Senator Steiner Hayward is proposing, via this bill and intent to propose further amendments, that we remove parent's rights to choose whether and when to vaccinate their children from this measles outbreak – of which only 15% were hospitalized and 1 in 5 of the cases were vaccinated (supported by the Merck acknowledgment that it's MMR II vaccine is not 100% effective)?*

This data does not strongly support the idea that attempting to force vaccinations by removing the exclusion clause will get more people immunized and thereby protect more people from the measles. We're not even talking about an outbreak that has killed anyone. We're just talking about the small percentage that got hospitalized. This bill proposes removing the rights of parents for the purported "emergent danger" of the small percentage chance a person would be hospitalized – if they even contracted the disease to begin with?

In a February 16, 2015 article by the Statesman Journal<sup>3</sup>, Saerom Yoo reports:

Steiner Hayward's original intent was to introduce a "technical fix" into how OHA enforces exemptions, but she plans to propose amendments that would get rid of nonmedical exemptions altogether.

I don't think the purpose of this bill is to impact the "emergency" Senator Steiner Hayward is proposing to declare via this bill. The purpose, as reported in this article, is to get rid of nonmedical exemptions because the "technical fix" of pushing parents to vaccinate didn't work.

If you want to argue the case for forcing parents to vaccinate their children, or have them excluded from school, give it a fair voice and bring it forward in a legitimate, transparent manner of its own. Utilizing the fear that neuroscience tells us literally, physiologically incapacitates us to use our entire brain and make a wise, fully informed decision is a slight of hand that removes the rights of the people to contribute intelligently to the real issue. Let's look at this clearly; the direct implication of this bill (vaccine education for all parents claiming exemption) can, in no way, give respite to the purported "emergency" of the measles cases.

I respectfully request each member of the committee to sit with all of the information and opinions presented to you. Really try to discern for yourself whether your thoughts on the subject are fueled by fear, or from the quiet peace within which is the hallmark of a fully integrated and operational brain.

1. CDC Health Alert Network, January 23, 2015; <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00376.asp>

2. ([http://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi\\_circulars/m/mmr\\_ii/mmr\\_ii\\_pi.pdf](http://www.merck.com/product/usa/pi_circulars/m/mmr_ii/mmr_ii_pi.pdf))

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