

To: The Honorable Arnie Roblan,  
Chair Senate Committee on Education

From: Jane C. Wilcox-Emery  
Toledo, OR 97391

Subject: Opposition to SB 895-2  
Senator Roblan and Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to SB 895-2, Senator Steiner-Hayward's latest attempt to usurp parental authority and individual liberty. This bill is not about the safety of our children. This is not about pro-vaccine or anti-vaccine. Oregon's vaccinations rates are above that needed for so-called "herd immunity". This is an issue of who is in charge of our medical choices, our personal choices. Will it be the government or the individual? In a state so committed to a woman's right to make her own reproductive choices, it is ironic that Sen. Steiner-Hayward is seeking to limit the choices that women (and men) wish to make for themselves and their families in regard to vaccinations. This is a slippery slope that we are wise to avoid.

There are four main problems with any attempt to make vaccinations mandatory. First, SB 895-2 does not allow for any philosophical exemptions. There are many people who hold sincere objections to vaccinations who ascribe to no religion or whose religion does not expressly forbid vaccinations. To compel these individuals to be vaccinated or to vaccinate their children is a violation of their right to self-determination. Second, the medical exemption places an undue burden on families, seeking a consult with a doctor in order to obtain a medical exemption could very well place a financial strain on those who can least afford it. Third, allowing the state to determine the substances that an individual puts in their bodies is a scary prospect. Whether one believes in the efficacy of vaccines or not, allowing representatives of the government to decide to inject a person with a disease is decidedly Orwellian. Finally, I am concerned with the

wording on line three of the amended bill that reads, "...and declaring an emergency". It is the experience of history that a declaration of emergency is often used as an excuse to trample on individual liberty and to declare civil liberties non-essential. This concerns me greatly.

Senator Roblan and Education Committee Members do not turn your backs on Oregon residents, live up to the reputation Oregonians are proud of: a reputation of individual liberty and self-determination.

Sincerely,

Jane C. Wilcox-Emery