



March 28, 2017

Senator Brian Boquist
900 Court Street NE, S-312
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Boquist,

I am writing today on behalf of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), a national trade association for the biotechnology industry, representing over 900 companies and academic institutions involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agriculture, industrial, and environmental biotechnology products. BIO membership includes vaccine developers and manufacturers who have worked closely with the public health community to support policies that help ensure access to innovation and life-saving vaccines for all individuals.

BIO and our member companies would like to express our opposition to Senate Bill (S.B.) 869, which requires health care providers to provide the ingredients of an immunization, in the form of the vaccine excipient and media summary, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to the parent or guardian of a child prior to every vaccine administered. This bill is unnecessary and duplicative of existing policy on providing vaccine background information prior to immunization, and may, at its worst, have deleterious effects on vaccination coverage in the state of Oregon.

Childhood vaccinations are the most effective and safe form of preventive medicine. Vaccinations have led to a decrease or eradication of many significant infectious diseases such as polio, measles, mumps, and rubella. They are extensively tested for safety and efficacy prior to going on the market, and continue to be monitored after introduction to the public. However, recent skepticism about vaccines has resulted in numerous outbreaks of nearly eliminated diseases. Measles, mumps, and pertussis have caused serious outbreaks in parts of the United States, as the CDC and local departments of health are reporting cases above the baseline expected rate of disease. As of December 2016, Oregon experienced an increase in mumps cases reported from Marion County, according to Oregon's Public Health Division.

S.B. 869 would require health care providers to provide parents and guardians with the ingredients of an immunization. Existing federal law already requires providers give parents or guardians copies of the Vaccine Information Statements before administering each dose of a vaccine. These statements are 1-2 page handouts produced by the CDC that inform families about the risk and benefits of a vaccine. They are written at an appropriate educational level that is clear and easy to understand and they include information that is relevant for the vaccine, including the most common side effects that parents should look for.

This bill would add an unnecessary administrative burden and costs to Oregon's busy primary care facilities. Moreover, requiring providers to disclose ingredients in vaccines is not particularly helpful for people without a specialized background. Vaccine ingredients are readily available online from the CDC if parents want to learn more, and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) provide a plethora of information online for specific vaccines. It is not current usual practice for clinicians to inform patients of the ingredients in a medication that is given or recommended during a medical visit. Treating vaccines differently will suggest to parents that they are more dangerous than other medications.

Finally, a transparent system with the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) keeps track of any vaccines determined to cause potential harm. According to the CDC, between 2006 and 2014, over 2.5 billion doses of covered vaccines were distributed in the U.S; within this timeframe, 2,265 compensation awards were made through the VICP. Additionally, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), sponsored by the CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), collects information about possible side effects that occur after people have been vaccinated in the U.S.

BIO and our member companies appreciate the goal of increasing scientific awareness of vaccines in Oregon, but we oppose S.B. 869 because is duplicative of existing policy on providing vaccine background information prior to immunization and may have a negative impact vaccination coverage in the state of Oregon. We stand ready to help in any discussion of alternatives as well as to share our knowledge of activities and initiatives from around the country. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that may arise.

With sincerest regards,



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CC:

Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair Senate Committee on Health Care
Sen. Jeff Kruse
Sen. Lee Beyer
Sen. Tim Knopp
Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward