

4 April 2017

Re: Support for SB 687

Chair Gelser and Committee Members:

Thank you for scheduling SB 687 for a public hearing.

Oregon law allows for a non-medical vaccine exemption. No parent should have to fear being bullied or accused of abuse simply for claiming the exemption that the law provides. However, doctors, especially at urgent care or emergency facilities, nearly all the time push vaccination, even in situations when vaccination would be inappropriate, such as with a child that is ill. A parent that is already in a stressful situation with a sick or ill child, should not have to fear being reported to CPS for refusing a vaccine. This fear leads to a parent possibly feeling the need to not be truthful with medical personnel, and impairs the doctor-patient relationship.

The article that was published in the Oregonian on March 28, 2017, painted an alarming picture of Oregon Child Protective Services. Children who are truly being abused are being left in deplorable conditions. At risk children who truly need help are dying under the watch of CPS. I assume that the case workers are overworked and overwhelmed. By amending the law to specifically state that not vaccinating or vaccinating on an alternate or delayed schedule is not abuse, valuable resources can be freed up to investigate true cases of abuse, rather than harassing parents who have likely spent hours of research and come to an informed decision regarding vaccination for their children.

I respectfully ask you to support this bill. Clarifying the law will free up resources that could be more productively used, as well as strengthen doctor-parent relationships by removing the fear of being reported for abuse by medical personnel who disagree with a parent's decision.

Thank you.

Darcy Rapoza

Salem