

April 4, 2017

Dear Senator Gelser and members of the Senate Committee On Human Services,

I am writing in support of SB 687. The addition of the language to our law is important to me as a mother. I know my children best and understand their healthcare needs at any given point of time. In an urgent or emergency situation where they could be in the care of an unfamiliar medical provider that is not our family doctor, there arises the potential to discuss what vaccines have been given or not given and why. My greatest fear is that an unfamiliar medical provider, without charts and tests that the family doctor has in his office, may not understand the reasons I have and have discussed with our family doctor for declining or delaying a vaccine. My fear is I would become threatened with a phone call to child protective services that I have neglected my child.

This fear does not come without justification, as I have heard the scenario above many times. I have seen hateful comments on social media encouraging family and friends of parents who are declining or delaying a vaccine to call child protective services and report them. I was familiar with an unfounded case just last fall here in Oregon where a baby was separated from her mother for days for declining a vaccine at birth, a vaccine that is only necessary if the mom is infected. Thankfully they were reunited, but only after a major disruption during some of the most important bonding moments and days just after birth. As a mother of five, I could not even begin to imagine the agony of my newborn baby being taken from me for this decision.

As parents, we stand by our decisions and do not make them lightly. At the same time, we should not live in a state of fear when making the best choices for our own children.

I respectfully request a yes vote on SB 687.

Stacy Cayce  
Hillsboro  
Executive Director of Oregonians For Medical Freedom