

In support of SB 687

Dear Chairperson Gelser and Committee Members,

Today, I am not here to talk about being pro-vaccine or anti-vaccine- I think those labels are irrelevant and destructive to any educated discussion of the matter anyway- Today I want to talk about protecting human rights, parental rights and insuring that the true intent of the law is clear and not open to misinterpretation. I am here to talk about the importance of SB 687, which clarifies that the definition of abuse does not include failure to vaccinate a child or the choice to delay vaccination.

You may not feel that this small change in the wording of the law is important, or relevant or necessary- to you. And maybe it isn't- for you. But it is vitally important to me, and tens of thousands of other loving, caring and hard working parents here in Oregon.

Just as you don't have to be a Woman to support equal pay for equal work, and you didn't have to be African American to support the abolishment of Jim Crow laws in the 60's or to end segregation and fight for equality- We support and protect each other for what is right, and decent in this world, not just for what personally affects us but for what affects others as well. We fight for equality, for the right to "liberty and justice" for ALL people, not just those that we agree or identify with.

SB 687 provides a clear distinction in the law that delaying or declining vaccination for your child is not child abuse, and protects parental rights to make informed medical decisions for their children without the threat of misinterpretation and abuse of the true intent of the law. It protects parents like me, who love their children dearly, and research and make the best informed decision for their children as possible, with only the child's best interest in mind. SB 687 clearly leaves the definition of abuse in the law to be used on those who knowingly and intentionally inflict harm on children.

There may be people out there, that so fervently believe in the importance of all vaccinations that they may personally feel that it IS a crime to delay or decline vaccination. To those people, I say this. Life is not without risk- everything we do carries with it a risk and a benefit. Every medical procedure and medicine carries with it its own set of risks and benefits. Vaccinations are no different. Last time I checked VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System in 2015 there were 8,739 recorded deaths, 13,194 Life Threatening reactions, 11,660 cases of permanent disability, 54,699 hospitalizations and 284,973 emergency room visits reported due to a vaccine since the establishment of VAERS in 1990.

On logic alone, the argument that not vaccinating your child should be considered a crime is fallible because then, shouldn't the converse also be true? If you are going to argue that the parent is criminally negligent for choosing to forego or delay a vaccination, based on the fact that the parent is choosing an action (or inaction) that produced or could potentially produce a negative result (arguably injury or death from said disease) then following the same logic- a parent who has a child that experiences an injury or death due to vaccination would then also be held criminally negligent for the child's harm because the parents chose an action that resulted (or could result) in the child's harm. But that seems cruel- because the parent vaccinating their child was just doing what they thought was best and unfortunately the outcome was negative. Just as it would be cruel to hold the unvaccinating parent

liable because they felt they were making the best decision for their child's well-being by *not* vaccinating. Both vaccinating and not vaccinating can have negative consequences.

Please support SB 687, clarifying that failure to vaccinate or delay vaccination is not child abuse. Please protect the true intent of the law and the true intent of the parent and work diligently to pass this simple but very important bill into law.

Thank you,

Sarah Bacon