

Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice Chair Linthicum, and members of the Committee:

We are writing to you in support of SB 649. We have read both the bill, and the letter of opposition sent to you by Dr. Paul Lewis, the Multnomah County Health Officer.

Dr. Lewis wrote that the bill "Requires that additional unnecessary or potentially misleading information be provided to parents. Current and long-standing practice before childhood vaccination includes verbal consent, signed consent, and provision of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-approved vaccine information statements in a language the parent reads. Parents are flooded with information and consent forms before vaccines are administered. This bill's additional requirement, providing the "package insert," is particularly unlikely to be helpful to parents. These long package insert documents are barely readable by medical professionals and not written or formatted for busy parents."

As busy parents of two children, we have yet to experience the "current and long standing practice" Dr. Lewis references. At vaccination appointments with our children, we were advised of the vaccines they were to receive, were handed papers that "we could read later if we wanted to", and were required to sign our consent. We have never been "flooded with information" nor were we advised about what was being injected into our children.

This led us to look up the statute governing informed consent in the State of Oregon - ORS 677.097 Procedure to obtain informed consent of patient. The statute reads as follows (emphasis added):

(1) In order to obtain the informed consent of a patient, a physician or physician assistant shall explain the following:

- (a) In general terms the procedure or treatment to be undertaken;
- (b) That there may be alternative procedures or methods of treatment, if any; and
- (c) That there are risks, if any, to the procedure or treatment.

*(2) After giving the explanation specified in subsection (1) of this section, the physician or physician assistant shall ask the patient if the patient wants a more detailed explanation. If the patient requests further explanation, the physician or physician assistant shall disclose in substantial detail the procedure,*

*the viable alternatives and the material risks unless to do so would be materially detrimental to the patient.* In determining that further explanation would be materially detrimental the physician or physician assistant shall give due consideration to the standards of practice of reasonable medical or podiatric practitioners in the same or a similar community under the same or similar circumstances.

We were quite surprised to learn that our pediatricians have never followed the statutory requirements to obtain our informed consent to our children's vaccinations. Not once! That is very troubling to us and reinforces why we believe this bill is necessary.

Dr. Lewis also takes issue with a provision of the bill that requires listing certain chemicals, as specified in ORS 431A.255, that are present in vaccines. Dr. Lewis is concerned that seeing formaldehyde in the ingredients list for a vaccine would be "frightening and misleading" to parents. Dr. Lewis goes on to state how common small amounts of formaldehyde are, and that the trace amount in vaccines is less than the amount already present in the body. We don't understand why Dr. Lewis would not be supportive of pediatricians and other health care providers providing this very explanation to parents. Obtaining legally required informed consent from parents, or patients, if they are 15 years of age or older, should never be viewed as "a burden" to healthcare providers. Further, to suggest that it would be to the material detriment of parents, or patients, to receive comprehensive information, in the course of giving their informed consent, is absurd.

Transparency and trust are the cornerstones of the doctor/patient relationship. SB 649 encourages both. Please vote yes on this bill.

Respectfully,

Jeff and Sophia Mekkers

Newberg, OR