

February 28, 2019

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

RE: Please support HB 3063!

Dear Representative Walden,

My name is Dr. Suzanne Mendez, and I'm a pediatrician in Bend, Oregon. and I am writing to urge your support of HB 3063, which seeks to remove the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law.

I have been in practice for over 15 years and have seen children die from vaccine-preventable diseases. One particular case of whooping cough stays with me: I cared for a 2-month-old baby who contracted whooping cough and ended up needing a heart-lung bypass machine to survive. Even with this amazing technology, she was left with severe neurologic deficits and died at 2 years of age from seizures. Her suffering and death could have easily been prevented by increased vaccination rates. And there are countless other stories I could share with you of deaths from vaccine-preventable meningitis and pneumonia.

Right now, Oregon and Southwest Washington are seeing first-hand the effects of the current measles outbreak on individuals, families, our caregivers and our community.

This outbreak was preventable. Those who opt out of vaccinating their children could place other vulnerable members of the population, including infants and those with compromised immune systems, at greater risk for exposure.

Despite what you may have heard, vaccines does not cause autism in children and are incredibly safe--- and much less risky than contracting the vaccine-preventable disease. Scientists at the CDC, the Institute of Medicine and other reputable entities have never found a credible link between the use of vaccines and autism in children.

Vaccines save lives. Please support HB 3063!

Thank you,

Dr. Suzanne Mendez
Pediatric Hospitalist
Bend, Oregon