

Dear House Health Care Committee,

***Oregon's non-medical exemptions are vital to kids like mine who can neither tolerate vaccines, nor meet the state's unreasonable medical exemption criteria.*** Per my son's pediatrician, he should not have vaccines based on his medical history; yet the requirements for medical exemptions are nearly impossible to meet. Losing the non-medical exemption would require us to either homeschool, or take our chances with our son's health so he can continue to attend the school he loves and where he excels.

Contrary to the stories in the news, there is not a measles emergency in Oregon. As of 2/21/19, just four people in Oregon have been diagnosed with the measles this year and all Oregon counties, per the Oregon Health Authority, report MMR vaccination rates well over the 90% considered necessary for herd immunity.

Regarding concerns about alleged rising non-vaccination rates, the most recent Oregon Health Authority report states that the true unvaccinated rate in our state is 2.6%, not the 7.5% that has been widely circulated. Required school vaccines include Hepatitis B, a sexually/needle-transmitted disease. Parents who vaccinate for everything else, but opt out of Hep B if the mother tests negative for it, are captured in the 7.5% exemption rate that is used to cause a panic about declining vaccination rates in Oregon.

My significant personal concerns aside, bodily autonomy is a basic human right. It is a very slippery slope for any government to override parental discretion and mandate what goes into citizens' bodies. As evidenced by Oregon's high overall vaccination numbers, 97.4% per the Oregon Health Authority, this bill is unnecessary and goes too far.

Sincerely yours,  
Alison Wood  
Oregon Resident