

February 26, 2019

Dear Chair Salinas and members of the House Committee on Health Care,

As members of House Committee on Health Care, I strongly urge you support HB3063 and please end non-medical exemptions for vaccines in Oregon. Non-vaccination of Oregon's children is a public health crisis. We are one of only 18 states that allow for personal belief exemptions. We must strengthen Oregon's immunization laws and reduce the number of Oregonians able to opt-out of vaccinations. Vaccines are safe and effective, but require collective immunization rates to be high enough to protect the general public, especially those who are medically unable to be vaccinated or are immunocompromised.

On a personal note, because of the current measles outbreak in Oregon & SW Washington, under the advice of our pediatrician, we are not taking our 18-week-old daughter any place where there may be large congregations of people or kids; this includes grocery stores, restaurants, OMSI, the Children's Museum, or other fun places that our three-year-old daughter wants to go. Measles is a serious and highly contagious disease that could be deadly to our youngest daughter if she were to become infected. She is too young to be vaccinated against measles (both our daughters are current on all of their vaccines according to the CDC schedule). I am very concerned about this outbreak as officials say it will likely last months because of low vaccinations rates. It is a very sad state of affairs that this outbreak is even occurring considering that in 2000 measles was considered to be eradicated from the US.

I care about the well-being of my children, but as a lifelong Oregonian, I also care about the health of our entire state. Please remember that we can and need to protect Oregon's children from serious diseases. Anti-science personal beliefs should not take precedent over the health of the community.

Thank you,

Kyle Harris  
Tigard, Oregon