

Thank you Chair Salinas and Health Care Committee,

My name is Melissa Cochran and I OPPOSE HB 3063.

As we approach this highly controversial subject, I would like to remind you that the MMR vaccination rate for Oregonian school children K-12 was 95.8% in 2018([1](#)). The Oxford Vaccine Group states that "to achieve herd immunity for measles at least 90-95% of the population need to be vaccinated."[\(2\)](#) As you can see, Oregon students are well within the ideal herd immunity rates for measles vaccination.

My testimony is in opposition to removing non-medical vaccine exemptions and I would urge you to try to see this issue from a different perspective for a moment.

Every single vaccine carries a risk of serious side effects - a fact listed several times on the CDC website. Reciting the slogan "vaccines are safe and effective" is misleading and portrays vaccines as risk-free, when they are not. Here is a brief list of some of the documented potential side effects of childhood vaccines, according to the CDC([3](#)):

- Seizures
- High fever, above 105*
- Permanent brain damage
- Deafness
- Joint-pain
- Pneumonia
- Encephalitis
- Meningitis
- Death

Every single vaccine carries a risk, and **there are now 54 vaccines recommended by the CDC by age 18**([4](#)). A popular belief is that the risk is so small that it doesn't matter (often quoted as "one in a million", which is false). But it matters to every single parent who has watched their child **suffer** with an adverse reaction to a product they were assured was "safe and effective".

Many parents who claim a non-medical exemption for their child, do so because they **did** vaccinate until their child experienced an adverse reaction. In many cases, these adverse reactions do not qualify the child for a medical exemption because of the strict criteria from the state and CDC that must be met. Other parents, like myself, were "lucky enough" to be vaccine injured themselves prior to having kids, and were able to learn the hard way that genetic susceptibilities can make an individual prone to vaccine injury.

As concerned parents, we consult with our doctors and we do countless hours of research. We spend our nights digging through endless published peer-reviewed studies, we learn about the genetic susceptibilities that can lead to vaccine injury, we read vaccine package inserts, vaccine ingredients, and vaccine risks, and we piece together our family history with it all.

Can you please see that we do not make this decision lightly?

There are other ethical, religious reasons that contribute to why some parents refuse certain vaccines, such as **the use of aborted fetal cells** in the following vaccines (listed as MRC-5 and WI-38 human diploid cells/ lung fibroblasts on the CDC excipient list): MMR, Varicella, MMRV, DTaP-IPV/Hib, Hep A, and more (5). **Removing non-medical exemptions would force people to go against deep-seated religious beliefs** if they are unable to homeschool their children, **which is unethical.**

Putting up barriers for children to receive an education is wrong.

I understand your intentions behind this bill, but I urge you to reconsider, as this will harm more than it will help. Medical freedom without coercion is essential in America.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Melissa Cochran

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

- Declaration of Independence, July 4th, 1776

SOURCES:

1) Oregon Health Authority; Oregon School Immunization Coverage; 2017-2018 Data in Spreadsheet Format; "Oregon Measles Immunization Rates by County for Grades K-12":

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/VACCINESIMMUNIZATION/GETTINGIMMUNIZED/Pages/SchRateMap.aspx>

2) Oxford Vaccine Group; Herd Immunity: How Does it Work?:

<https://www.ovg.ox.ac.uk/news/herd-immunity-how-does-it-work>

3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Potential Side-effects from Vaccines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/side-effects.htm>

4) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Recommended Vaccines by Age:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/vaccines-age.html>

5) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Vaccine Excipient & Media Summary

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/excipient-table-2.pdf>