

## Vaccine Bill Testimony Template

DATE February 27, 2019

TO Oregon State Legislature, Senate Committee on Health Care

Re: Support for HB 3063

Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

I am Deborah Rand R.N. from Portland, Oregon, writing to urge your support of HB 3063, which seeks to remove the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law.

[One to two pages of points/arguments and reasons for position. Examples – 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. 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.]

I worked for Multnomah County in the Immunization Department for 12 years. The two main arguments I heard from parents against vaccinating their children were the fear of Autism and that measles is not a dangerous illness. The Autism argument has been proven false. Before the measles vaccine was widely available ( about 1968) according to the CDC , 3-4 million US citizens got the measles each year. Around 48,000 had to be hospitalized and 6000 died yearly. Measles is not a “right of passage” illness. It is a very dangerous disease.

Key Messages:

- **Vaccines save lives.**
- **Vaccine exemption rates are skyrocketing in Oregon.** Right now, 7.5% of children in kindergarten are unvaccinated, putting us below the community immunity threshold and endangering vulnerable populations.
- **This isn't about removing choice, this is about protecting those who have NO choice.** Individuals with compromised immune systems, infants, cancer survivors, transplant recipients and many others have no protection against certain diseases. As a conscientious society, it is our responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves by getting vaccinated.

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- **We are facing a public health emergency today.** Oregon is seeing the impact of high vaccine exemption rates in the Portland area as over 61 individuals have contracted Measles, an extremely contagious disease with devastating effects.

Summarize:

I ask the committee to protect children's lives. Please support HB 3063.

Thank you,

Deborah Rand R.N.