

DATE February 28, 2019

TO Oregon State Legislature, Senate Committee on Health Care

Re: Support for HB 3063

Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for hearing my testimony today. My name is Carrie Hazel, and I'm widowed mom of two from Hillsboro, Oregon, and I am here today to urge your support of HB 3063, which seeks to remove the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law.

In 2016, I received the call that every parent dreads: there was a concerning mass in my 9 year old daughter's leg and after an MRI doctors believed it could be a tumor. Lilly was diagnosed after her biopsy with Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis - a disease that causes tumors to grow in her bones and organs. After it was discovered that she also had a mass in her pituitary gland, we were told that she would have to undergo a year of chemotherapy.

We were immediately plunged into a terrifying world. After surgery to place a port, weekly chemotherapy treatments began. These treatments have been terrifying and painful for Lilly and often leave her feverish and vomiting, sending us to the ER many times. The drugs that she must take have many side effects, which sap her energy and intensify her anxiety. The chemotherapy has also left her immunocompromised, putting her at increased risk for contracting dangerous diseases. Suddenly the issue of vaccination, an issue that I had already felt strongly about, was thrown into sharp relief - Lilly's life could be at risk due to encountering unvaccinated children at her school. When the recent measles outbreak began in Southern Washington and moved into Portland - my worry intensified. Measles is highly contagious, and Lilly could not afford to be exposed.

When I take Lilly to Doernbecher's Childrens Hospital for her treatments, I see scores of other parents just like me who are experiencing their own personal nightmares. I see the love and hope and fear in their eyes. And it fills me with pain to know that while fighting the toughest fight of our lives, we must also be burdened by the worry that another person could thoughtlessly put our children's lives at further risk.

I do believe that most parents love their children and want what's best for them. I believe that those who are against vaccinating their children believe that they are doing what is best for their children. But their ill informed choice endangers the lives of

children like my daughter. HB3063 does not take that choice away from them, but rather prevents them from risking the lives of other children in their communities.

The science on vaccinations is robust and clear - vaccines are safe and they save countless lives every year. Falling vaccination rates endanger everyone, and in the recent measles outbreak we can see the impact of lowered herd immunity. Measles will kill 1 out of 1500 children who contract it. That number might appear high, but when you measure it against the less than 1 in a million chance that a child might experience a vaccine related injury, you can see where the risks truly lie.

I urge you to pass this bill so that children like my daughter can receive their educations in a safe and healthy environment. So that parents like me don't have to fear for the safety of their children while they are in school. Vaccines are safe and provide vital protections against death and disease for all children. I ask the committee to protect children's lives. Please support HB 3063.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Carrie Hazel