

Dear Representative Andrea Salinas, Committee Members on Health Care and Co-sponsors of HB 3063,

I am writing with great concern for House Bill 3063 that would eliminate non-medical vaccine exemptions for school children. I have read the co-sponsors' support of this bill and their reasoning, and I would like to ask that the committee consider the following counterpoints as you move forward.

First, I would like the committee to know that my husband and I vaccinated our three children, though we delayed a few and spaced them out. We had conversations with our pediatricians and did tons of research. I tell you this so you understand that we are conscientious, mindful parents who put our children's health and well-being first, and importantly, we are not against vaccinations.

Co-sponsors of the bill were quoted as saying that we must "close loopholes" that place us at "risk of illness and death from (these) diseases." They also stated that they "believe in science, the safety of our children and in sensible, fact-based public policy." I want to point out that facts actually show there have been fewer than 15 deaths from measles since 1999, with far more children injured from vaccines themselves.

You want to proceed with scientific, fact-based research. However, did you know the pharmaceutical companies that manufacture vaccines have 100% immunity from any injuries or deaths that occur due to their vaccines? In 2011, the Supreme Court ruled that pharmaceutical companies would have no liability for their products. In other words, they cannot be sued by a mother who witnesses her own child suffer a vaccine injury. The current vaccine schedule is not backed by rigorous, objective scientific review. 20,123 people have reported injury or death due to vaccines in the past 30 years, and 17,576 cases have been resolved with 2 out of 3 claims receiving monetary compensation. \$4 billion has been paid to victims of vaccine injury and death by the US government, and this only takes into account official cases reporting vaccine injury and death. There may be thousands more that have gone unreported. Scientific, fact-based research is marred by the conflicts of interest arising when top executives at the CDC are close allies with and financial investors in Pharmaceutical companies.

I would also ask you to consider the accuracy of the premise on which this bill is based. The claim is that we must achieve 95% vaccination rates to achieve 'herd immunity.' This is a false premise, and here is why: If this bill passes and 100% of children are vaccinated, the rate in the wider community (adults and children) will still be much lower. This is because the vast majority of adults have not received boosters and therefore are effectively not protected or have limited protection. We know this to be true because the CDC itself recommends all adults get boosters due to the known waning of vaccine protection. Therefore, forcing all of our children to be vaccinated will not achieve 95% coverage nor is 95% needed to keep us from having major outbreaks.

You want to proceed with scientific, fact-based research. However, in stark contrast to measles statistics, there have been 26,000 children killed in gun violence in the USA since 1999. In addition, 187,000 children have been exposed to school shootings since 1999. Gun violence is now the 3rd leading cause of death of children in the USA. If you are worried about our children's safety and concerned with fact-based public policy, then where is the bill to address governmental study, intervention and preventative policy relating to gun violence? Furthermore, approximately 40,000 children have died in car accidents since 1999 (accidents are the leading cause of death of children), and 1.5 million children are homeless today in the USA, and we know this is a frightening reality here in Oregon. Where is the bill to address homelessness in children in Oregon?

This bill title “declares an emergency.” However, only four people were diagnosed with measles in Oregon during the latest “outbreak,” and the death rate for measles is less than 1/10 of one percent. How can measles be considered an emergency when the aforementioned issues are not emergencies? All evidence suggests lawmakers are not viewing this issue in its proper context.

The sensible public policy lawmakers speak of should include a parent’s right to make medical decisions for their own child without government involvement or mandate. **Parental choice is not only absolutely necessary in such a situation; it is a parent’s RIGHT. How in good conscious can we have a broad mandate forcing parents to put something into their children’s bodies that has been proven to cause harm in some children? The ‘threat’ from measles simply does not justify forcing vaccines onto people.**

As one of your constituents, I ask that the committee take these concerns to heart. Continue the current protocol, where a parent must watch educational videos and get their pediatrician’s signature to opt out of certain vaccines if they feel that is the best option for their child. But please do not force a government mandate in response to a media hysteria based on less than 5 cases of a treatable illness.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Kerrie Zurovsky  
Bend, OR