

Good Day,

My name is Kristy Torpey and I am a mother and registered nurse here in the Portland area.

I am writing to urge you to Oppose House Bill 3063.

This bill is concerning to me both as a medical professional and as a mother.

In the nursing code of ethics, it states, "Nurses consider the needs and respect the values of each person in every professional relationship and setting. (1.1) When planning patient, family and population centered care, factors such as lifestyle, culture, value system, religious or spiritual beliefs, social support system and primary language shall be considered. Such considerations must promote health, address problems and respect patient decisions. This respect for patient decisions does not require that the nurse agree with or support all patient choices. (1.2) Respect for human dignity requires the recognition of specific patient rights, in particular, the right of self-determination. Patients have the moral and legal right to determine what will be done with their own person; to be given accurate, complete, and understandable information in a manner that facilitates an informed decision; to be assisted with weighing the benefits, burdens, and available options in their treatment, including the choice of no treatment; to accept, refuse, or terminate treatment without deceit, undue influence, duress, coercion, or prejudice; and to be given necessary support throughout the decision-making and treatment process. Such support includes the opportunity to make decisions with family and significant others and to obtain advice from expert/knowledgeable nurses and other health professionals. (1.4) I take my profession and my duty to my patients very seriously. My patients deserve care that is led by them and tailored to their needs not coerced by the possibility of losing something like the right to public education. Taking away the ability to have a personal or religious exemption from patients is unethical and is discrimination.

The code also clearly states that we as medical professionals must respect patients' decisions whether we agree or not. It requires that we respect the right to self-determination. If services are taken away from those who make a choice that we don't like or agree with how is that respecting their right to self-determination? The only thing this bill allows people to determine for themselves is which is more important, public education or going against their religion, risking further vaccine injury or any number of other reasons that individuals decide not to vaccinate. Most importantly "Patients have the moral and legal right to determine what will be done with their own person; to be given accurate, complete, and understandable information in a manner that facilitates an informed decision" I will tell you as a healthcare professional, that this does not happen regarding vaccines. The approach tends to be more like "Vaccines are just what you do .... oh, here is a sheet (VIS) if you want to know about the 6 injections we just put in your newborn, have a nice day." I am not sure true education is happening in many places because many healthcare professionals are not really educated on vaccines past the basics, they get in school. There is very little teaching addressing the ingredients or potential reactions, new research how to diagnose a reaction or what to do if one is suspected. Much of this is left to professionals to do on their own time, if they choose. Many professionals I know did not even know that there was a decision made that takes the liability away from the manufacturers of these vaccines, and they didn't know there was a place to report vaccine adverse reactions. (VAERS) This is crazy!

My next concern is, where does this stop? I am concerned that if it is mandated that students have to have vaccines to go to school that it wont stop there. Why not mandate that nurses and doctors

have them? What about the teachers in the classrooms? What about ALL the staff in medical facilities? What about visitors to medical facilities? How would you enforce this? I think it is getting closer and closer to having to pin a proverbial star to our clothes like the Jews in Nazi Germany. I think most of us can agree that that was wrong, right?

I care for many patients and help them navigate making choices for themselves and their children, BUT it comes down to them. They must choose. My job is to educate so that they are not afraid. Who makes good decisions when they are afraid? Not most. With all the fear perpetuated by the media and a lot of the leaders out there and the lack of actual research and knowledge on the part of many citizens, they will demand that this is mandated out of fear not because they really feel that this is the best way or know much about the subject at all. They will, however; jump on the bandwagon of blame and shame and continue to perpetuate the fear until they either have a vaccine injury in their family or until a different freedom they hold dear is stripped from them.

You may be thinking, wait what about medical exemptions? Medical exemptions are exceptionally hard to obtain and with this legislation I believe that will become even more true. There are many of my patients and friends that have a medical reason they should not continue vaccinating, which is listed in the package insert. (which is very hard to obtain from providers by the way) Yet these same patients and friends have been denied medical exemptions from OHA for a plethora of reasons.

My concerns don't stop with my professional ethics concerns, they continue with my concerns as a parent. Prior to 2010 when my first child was born, again as a RN, I just went along with western medicine. The moment my son was born I was struck with the weight of the responsibility that I have in raising him and any future children (I now have 3). I am tasked with making the best decisions I can for them so that they are happy and healthy and that they grow to be able to make the best decisions they can for themselves and their families. As I began my parenting journey, I realized how much I just blindly followed many things without asking questions and researching for myself. I have for years now done that research and have asked the tough questions to be able to feel that I have enough knowledge to make the best decisions I can for my family. For us, that has meant forgoing vaccines. Now, I am being told that I should no longer have that right because people are afraid, afraid of an outbreak of measles that doesn't really exist in Oregon. Afraid of a disease outbreak that even with 99% vaccination rates would not be eliminated. I would be mandated to take the risk and vaccinate for things like tetanus which is not transmitted from person to person and the diphtheria toxoid vaccine which is not designed to prevent colonization and transmission of *C. diphtheriae*. It is meant for personal protection only. Why should I be forced to put my children at risk to make someone else feel better? How would you feel if you were coerced into making a medical decision by having your education or your career threatened? This is unethical!

If this bill was to pass that would mean that my family would have to either compromise our religious and philosophical beliefs, struggle more than we already do in order to have one parent home at all times to educate our children, or leave the beautiful state of Oregon. My family would not be alone in our struggle either. How are single parents or families already in poverty going to afford to have someone stay home to educate their children? How much is this going to cost the state in different program funds that these families would need to utilize in order to feed their families etc.?

This is not good enough for me. We have the right to personal autonomy. Know better, do better. WHERE THERE IS RISK THERE MUST BE CHOICE!

