

February 28, 2019

The Honorable Andrea Salinas Chair, House Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3063

Dear Chair Salinas and members of the House Committee on Health Care,

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I am Colin Cave, a Permanente physician speaking on behalf of Kaiser Permanente, and I am here to speak strongly in favor of House Bill 3063.

Kaiser Permanente exists to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We believe that removing the non-medical vaccine exemption from Oregon law is a critical step to protect the health and safety of our children and the most vulnerable Oregonians.

First, I would like to acknowledge that there are grey areas in medicine - such as whether to take statins to help prevent heart attacks.

But there is no legitimate argument that childhood immunizations are anything other than necessary, safe and effective.

95% of the community must be immunized to protect others who cannot be vaccinated because of weakened immune systems, health conditions, or age. Oregon is below this number, and our most vulnerable are at risk.

As such, we have recently seen Measles making a comeback. And make no mistake – Measles can have devastating health effects. While most cases are self-limited, other cases can result in vision loss, hearing loss, pneumonia, brain damage and death.

Measles is one of the most highly contagious viruses on the planet. Once in the air, it can infect others for up to two hours.

I am not here to persuade the people on the other side of this debate. There is no need. The Institute of Medicine and the CDC have conclusively shown that there is no link between autism and vaccines, and the author of that original 1998 paper has lost his medical license and the journal has retracted the debunked report.

I am here instead to request that you, as those entrusted with the health and well-being of Oregonians, make the right decision on this issue and protect Oregonians from needless and preventable disease. After California passed SB 277 to eliminate the non-medical exemption, vaccination rates increased from 92.8% to 95.1% in just two school years. We can make a difference. Please vote yes on HB 3063. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Dr. Colin Cave
Northwest Permanente
Medical Director for External Affairs, Government Relations and Community Health.