



OREGON ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

February 28, 2019
House Health Committee
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: HB 3063 Non-medical Exemptions

The Oregon Academy of Family Physicians supports HB 3063. Oregon has the highest rate of kids entering kindergarten claiming non-medical exemption in the nation at 7.5%. This is an alarming trend, as higher exemption rates mean more disease. By requiring that all children in public school be vaccinated, we can lower the spread of infectious disease, and protect vulnerable community members who are unable to be vaccinated due to medical or age-related issues.

Preventable diseases have real risks. Before implementation of the national measles vaccination program in 1963, measles occurred in epidemic cycles and virtually every person acquired measles before adulthood (an estimated 3 to 4 million persons acquired measles each year). Approximately 500,000 persons with measles were reported each year in the United States, of whom 500 persons died, 48,000 were hospitalized, and another 1,000 had permanent brain damage from measles encephalitis.¹ It's a marker of the success of our public health sector and health care workers that we do not experience outbreaks of this severity anymore, but if community immunity is further weakened, we could see the return of such drastic impacts.

HB 3063 is a measured step in supporting community immunity and avoiding the pain and suffering that results from preventable diseases like measles, mumps, whooping cough, and polio. We urge your support.

Respectfully,
Sam Barber
Lobbyist, Oregon Academy of Family Physicians

¹ Bloch AB, Orenstein WA, Stetler HC, et al. Health impact of measles vaccination in the United States. *Pediatrics* 1985;76:524-32.