

March 2, 2019

Dear Health Care Committee and those sponsoring the HB 3063,

I recently learned of the house bill stating all children currently exempt for religious or philosophical reasons for not having all vaccines will be excluded from attending public school, with immediate action to remove students. I wish I had the opportunity to send this in as a testimony opposing HB 3063 sooner, but I learned of it too late. I hope you will still consider this written letter with just as much importance.

I have worked in public school for 22 years in 5 different schools ranging from K-12. First, there are very few families that choose to not vaccinate, but I have always respected their beliefs and these parents make this decision with much thought and education. It is not in haste or quick reaction. In my 22 years, none of the students have contracted a vaccine related illness that is passed or spread to other students. Ironically, in my 22 years, I've seen a huge rise in anti-social behavior and autism spectrum behavior. Uncountable parents have shared with me the almost immediate changes in their child after certain vaccines were given. Even of "correlation does not equal causation," correlation deserves serious pause and attention

My role for 20 years has been a professional school counselor in the public schools. Aside from my experiences with non vaccinated youth not being a risk to our public schools, I ask you to please consider the emotional and social ramifications if these students are pulled immediately from their learning and social environment. Children thrive with structure and knowing what to expect each day and school is part of every child's day. When any child is pulled from a school quickly and placed in another school (family strife, loss of housing, etc), it is considered one of the ACE factors equating to what child psychologists and schools now identify as a traumatic event. The more ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) a child has, the more likely he or she will be subject to social isolation, drug and alcohol misuse, learning issues, and an increase in dropout rate.

Preventing social isolation for students is one of my top priorities as a counselor as this is where suicide ideation, self-harm, attempted suicide and suicide are at greatest risk. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in 10-24 year olds. As part of the school district's flight team (team of counselors trained to support staff and students after a death or traumatic event in a school), I have been called to aide in the support of a school community 6 times after a death by

suicide. This is 6 times too many in my 10 years of service on the flight team. Suicide ideation is soaring with 100's of suicide screeners being done each year by school counselors. After interviewing teachers, peers and family members of these students thinking about suicide or committing suicide, the most common theme in every event was the student not feeling they belonged. A feeling of belonging is research based in determining the self esteem level of a human being, both as a child and adult. If these non-vaccinated or partially vaccinated children are taken from school, it will create a sense of not belonging and do more emotional damage in the long run. Parents will have no discourse for where to place their children to learn and then potentially forced into a decision that goes against their religious beliefs or medical opposing beliefs for the health of their children.

Please consider the decision to NOT push this bill forward. The cost vs. reward pay-off is not there. Please respect the few families that are exempting their children from all or some vaccines. A Free and Appropriate education should be guaranteed to all children, regardless of their vaccination status.

Sincerely,  
Robin L. Morgan  
Hillsboro, Oregon