

Submitter: Daria Howell  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

#### Testimony in Opposition to SB1598

I am here to express my opposition to SB1598, not because I oppose public health, but because I strongly support accountability, informed consent, and the constitutional balance between public authority and individual rights.

This bill grants broad, ongoing authority to unelected public health officials to impose mandates that affect every resident of our state—without additional legislative approval or meaningful public debate. Specifically, the bill:

Allows vaccine requirements to be imposed as a condition for school access without further legislative action

Enables one-size-fits-all medical mandates that do not account for individual circumstances or consent

Requires insurers and taxpayer-funded programs to fully cover mandated medical interventions, regardless of personal choice

Undermines the role of physicians by limiting their ability to exercise professional judgment in the best interest of their patients

These provisions represent a significant shift in how decisions are made—moving them away from elected representatives, families, and medical professionals, and concentrating them within a centralized administrative authority.

#### Why does this matter?

When power is centralized and accountability is diminished, parental rights, medical discretion, and informed consent are weakened. Public health decisions are complex and often involve tradeoffs that deserve transparency, legislative oversight, and public input. Emergency powers may be appropriate in narrowly defined, time-limited circumstances—but this bill creates standing authority with no clear off-ramp.

Doctors, not bureaucracies, are best positioned to make individualized medical decisions. Parents, not the state, should remain primary decision-makers for their children. And policies with statewide impact should be debated and approved by the people's elected representatives—not implemented indefinitely through

administrative rulemaking.

We can protect public health without abandoning these principles. I urge you to reject SB1598 or amend it to restore legislative oversight, protect informed consent, and preserve the doctor–patient relationship.

Thank you for your time and consideration.