

March 19, 2019

Dear Representative Marsh:

I am writing to express my concern re HB 3063, which if passed, would eliminate religious and philosophical vaccine exemptions for Oregonians.

I am a Yale trained medical doctor, and, after serving in the Public Health Service, have been practicing family medicine in Ashland since 1996. I have offered balanced professional vaccination advice to the parents of thousands of children in my 30 years of medical practice. My (mostly vaccinated) children were educated here in Ashland, and my grandchildren are soon to be enrolled in our local schools. So I have both personal and professional stakes in this very complex and polarizing issue.

I have no doubt that vaccines do prevent diseases, and I am grateful that they are available to those who choose them. Over the years I've treated children and adults with vaccine-preventable illnesses, and I recognize the potentially serious consequences of declining vaccines. And I certainly understand public health concerns surrounding the importance of herd immunity in preventing epidemics.

However, there is no convincing evidence that, in the long run, vaccinated children have improved health outcomes.

I am concerned that, in addition to obvious immediate adverse vaccine reactions, vaccines may contribute to a variety of chronic medical conditions. I've often wondered if recent dramatic increases in autoimmune diseases are related to vaccines' subtle effects on immune system development? Until recently, every generation of children was universally exposed to measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, etc. Perhaps (speculating here using simple Darwinian reasoning) exposure to these diseases actually confers some natural selection advantage?

In addition to these medical doubts, I have grave political concerns regarding compulsory vaccination laws. Do we really want to withhold core government services, such as public education, based on a family's compliance with compulsory medical procedures? What would be next? What are the political implications of this slippery slope?

This is absolutely not the kind of society I wish to create!

The vaccination issue is a complex one that cannot be answered by a 'one size fits all' government mandate. It is unconscionable for the state to force these intrusive interventions on all families. I therefore urge you to oppose HB 3063.

As an interested citizen with broad knowledge and experience, I would be happy to come to Salem to testify regarding this matter.

Sincerely and respectfully, Howard W. Morningstar, MD