

February 11, 2002

Re: HB 2601

Dear Chairman Huebert and Education Committee,

I write to you today to ask for your support of HB 2601 to restrict the unlimited authority of the Secretary of KDHE to mandate vaccines. I am still absolutely outraged over the underhanded fiasco that culminated in the addition of two unnecessary vaccines- Meningitis and Hepatitis A- to the already-packed childhood schedule in Kansas in 2019.

ONE PERSON who is not in an elected position, representing zero constituents, had the authority to add 2 different vaccines in one fell swoop to the mandated schedule for all Kansas children, demonstrating absolutely no need for these vaccines, with (almost) no input from parents. There are so many breaches of morality, freedom and liberty in this one sentence that I almost don't know where to begin.

1. Vaccines are drugs. They are made by drug companies. They are a multi-billion dollar industry. However, they are the only drugs (the only product or service on this earth, actually) for which you CANNOT sue the manufacturer for injury or death. They have blanket immunity, since 1986. The taxpayers get to pay for the vaccine injuries and deaths through the fund set up by the government, the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (NVICP), which is estimated to represent about ONE percent of all vaccine injuries and has paid out more than 4.2 BILLION dollars for that ONE percent. Claims are filed in the US Court of Federal Claims. The government obviously recognizes that deaths and injuries from vaccines exist, yet the pervasive tagline that we hear about vaccines over and over again is "safe and effective". I don't think the parents of sick and dead children agree with this.
 - a. Why do taxpayers have to pay for vaccine damages? Why don't rich, corrupt (all 4 vaccine manufacturers have been found guilty of FRAUD) vaccine manufacturers have to pay for the damages and harm of their own products? (wait- they do- for ALL of them, except vaccines.) Does this really set up a good system for the American people to get the best, safest possible product? No! Our children shouldn't *have to* consume any product that was made by a company already convicted of fraud.
 - b. HOW CAN ANY DRUG be mandated? All drugs have side effects. All drugs contain foreign substances. They are not natural.
 - c. How can any drug THAT LISTS DEATH AS AN ADVERSE EVENT be mandated?
 - d. How can any drug that lists death as an adverse event AND FOR WHICH THE MANUFACTURER IS NOT LIABLE, be mandated?
 - e. How can any drug that lists death as an adverse event and for which the manufacturer is not liable and HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF FRAUD, be mandated?
 - f. How can any drug that lists death as an adverse event, and for which the manufacturer is not liable and has been convicted of fraud, THAT HAS HAD ZERO OF THE REQUIRED BIENNIAL REPORTS OF SAFETY STUDIES FILED IN THE LAST 30 YEARS (as required by Congress, of the US Dept of Health & Human Services), be mandated?

This question could go on and on, but you get the point. It's an absolute assault on our freedom.

2. When Statute 72-6262, granting sole authority to the Secretary of KDHE to add mandates to the Kansas Childhood Vaccine schedule, was passed in 1961, there were 3 vaccine doses. Today there are 72. There is something wrong here, if vaccines are designed to protect people yet we have the sickest children we have ever had, and we know vaccines can cause injury and death, yet they continue to be mandated and the schedule continues to grow. At some point, we have to step back and see if what we're doing is making sense, instead of blindly staying the course.
3. Meningococcal vaccine had already been considered by then-Secretary of KDHE Susan Mosier in 2017 and deemed unnecessary. Proponents of this vaccine were not to be denied and submitted a bill through the Legislature to get a mandate. The bill was defeated in the Senate. Since 2017, Kansas has seen three cases of Meningitis and zero deaths. Yet, this vaccine was added to the schedule in 2019 by the current KDHE Secretary. Where is the need?? We know vaccines cause damage and death. How can the KDHE conscionably add this vaccine for all school aged children when there is virtually no threat? The risks FAR outweigh the "benefits" in this case. This is a terrible decision for the health of Kansas children.
4. The Hepatitis A vaccine mandate from 2019 is even more outrageous. Hepatitis A is an extremely rare infection that most commonly occurs in the following populations- travelers to countries where Hepatitis A is common, men who have sex with men, illegal drug users, people with clotting factor disorders, and people working with primates. All Kindergarten and First Grade students had to have this vaccine in order to attend school for the 2019 Fall semester, following the new mandate, unless they had an exemption. Going forward, this 2-dose vaccine is slated to be given at twelve months, with six months between doses. WHY? Why does a ONE YEAR OLD need this vaccine? Again, where is the need? Again, we know vaccines cause damage and death. Again, how can the KDHE conscionably add this vaccine for all children, knowing vaccines carry great risk, when the threat of the infection is minimal, and children are not in the at-risk population for Hepatitis A? Another terrible decision for the health of Kansas children.
5. How did these two baseless mandates come about? Well, it was a pretty questionable process. A hearing was held in March 2019 after only an 11-day notice (not public), instead of the required 60-day notice to the public. Once the KDHE was called out on this blunder, they backtracked and followed the proper protocol of publishing the notice of a public hearing 60 days prior in the Kansas Register. However, the "word" on new mandates had already been spread via letters to the school district from KDHE in February (note- BEFORE even the first hearing) and continued to be spread to county health agencies as "provisional based on expected revision to K.A.R. 28-1-20...". Some school districts and county health agencies then sent information out to parents and community members, posted on Facebook pages, and notified via media of two new mandates "required" for school entry in Fall 2019, without the caveat that these were not, in fact mandates, and the hearing had not even occurred yet. These two vaccines were not officially mandated until August 2, 2019. (And they never should have been at all). This whole process reminds me that the people really have no voice in this. Minds were made up before the process even started; that hearing with 100+ people dissenting was just a formality. They were never going to listen to us and take us seriously, despite the fact that we demonstrated through testimony that the actual risks of vaccinating all Kansas children for these two infections was far more dangerous than any perceived risk and very low probability of children contracting these infections.

I urge you to consider the repercussions of a sole authority deciding what gets injected into our children's bodies and support HB 2601. Parents should have a right to choose vaccines, or not, freely. We should not be forced to inject our children with dangerous harmful substances at the discretion of one person. Please vote yes for HB 2601. Thank you for listening.

Jennifer Goates, Licensed Professional Counselor, Topeka, Kansas