



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION to HB 2601

February 13, 2020

Chairman Huebert and Members of the House Education Committee,

The Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents over 90% of the practicing pediatricians in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas have the opportunity to grow safe and strong. It is with this goal in mind that we want to share our strong opposition to HB 2601 which limits the ability of public health officials to act in a timely manner. This is detrimental not only to public health in Kansas, but specifically child health and school safety. Kansas pediatricians oppose bills that intentionally or unintentionally have a negative impact on vaccination coverage in the state. By interfering with benign sections of statute, we are unintentionally giving a platform to misinformation about vaccines. Vaccines are safe and effective.

The legislature serves a critical function in passing laws to protect the citizens of Kansas. Decisions to change the immunization laws should be held to the highest standards of evidence-based scientific deliberations. HB 2601 would remove the responsibility of determining health regulatory immunization policy from KDHE and place such responsibility with the state legislature and limit additions or subtractions to one year instead of into perpetuity. It would delay protection of Kansas' citizens from serious infectious diseases by requiring legislative approval. Should vaccine recommendations change (including change in dosing or schedule, addition of new vaccine against pandemic infectious disease, or removal of a recommendation,) it is essential to our state to be able to adapt and respond to these issues in a timely and effective manner. KDHE should maintain the ability to determine and address critical health related issues without political undermining.

The National Immunization Survey data from 2017 are located at this [link](#), click on Kansas for Kansas specific data. The Healthy People 2020 Target goal is 80% of children 19-35 months old to complete the combined 7 vaccine series. The national average is 70.4% and Kansas 69.5%. Influenza vaccine coverage is 53.2% in Kansas compared to 57.9% nationally. The HPV vaccine which prevents cancer is only 55.2% for female, 49.8% for males 13-17 years old, compared to 68.6% female and 62.6% for males nationally. The Kansas Legislature should consider policies that build upon, rather than hinder immunization rates.

We must continue vaccinating to protect people by lessening and eliminating disease outbreaks. Vaccinations have led to steep decreases and eradication of many significant infectious diseases such as polio, measles, mumps, pertussis, and haemophilus influenza type B (Hib). Without immunizations, students, their families, and their communities are at risk for serious, potentially



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fatal diseases. Immunizations are our best protection against preventable disease and can help all Kansans live longer, healthier lives.

What might seem like simple adjustments to legislative and regulatory processes could have real-life consequences for the health of children across the population of the state. Anything that hinders progress is a step in the wrong direction. KDHE should maintain the ability to determine and address critical health related issues without political undermining. On behalf of Kansas Pediatricians, we would like to express our strong opposition to HB 2601 and respectfully request your NO VOTE on HB 2601.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislative Coordinator
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References:

- American Academy of Pediatrics at AAP.org/immunization
- Healthy People 2020 at <https://www.healthypeople.gov>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/index.html>
- Vaccination reports http://www.kdheks.gov/immunize/kindergarten_coverage.htm