

February 11, 2020

Chairman Huebert, Vice Chair Dietrich, and the House Education Committee,

I am a practicing family nurse practitioner in Medicine Lodge, Kansas and in my practice, I care for rural people of all ages, birth to the elderly. My work as a nurse practitioner, besides caring for those who are ill is also to keep people safe and promote health. One way I do this is to promote vaccination to prevent disease. With this in mind, I oppose HB 2601 because it will limit public health expertise in the decisions of public health matters. Decisions to make changes to immunization requirements should continue to be the responsibility of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) as they have done since 1979. KDHE employs experts in public health medicine who study the scientific evidence to determine the necessary changes to immunization requirements. These immunization requirements are there to protect daycare and school age children as they enter these venues.

Vaccines are safe and effective. To have the state legislature determine immunizations for our children, there would be a politicizing of immunizations and give a platform for misinformation. Immunizations have significantly decreased or eradicated diseases like polio, measles, mumps, pertussis, meningitis, and many more. If changes to the schedule need to occur, HB 2601 limits the ability to have this happen in a timely manner. This bill puts the public health of Kansas and specifically child health and school safety in jeopardy.

I respectfully request that you vote no on HC 2601.

Sincerely,

Patricia McNamar APRN, NP-C

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