

Janet Levatin, MD  
Testimony in Support of HB 193  
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My name is Janet Levatin, MD, and I have been a physician since 1982. I have been board certified in pediatrics since 1989, and I maintain licenses to practice medicine in Massachusetts and Ohio.

For my whole career I have been dealing with patients who have sustained injuries or side effects from vaccines. The worst of these were three infants I saw who died of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) within 24 hours of being vaccinated.... the ultimate vaccine "side effect." But vaccine reactions can occur at any time, to anyone, after any vaccine, including routine, annual influenza vaccines. I have personally witnessed many acute and chronic reactions to vaccines, some of them leaving patients with lifelong, debilitating medical conditions and disabilities.

At the same time the US vaccination schedule has steadily increased both in the number of vaccines and the number of doses given, the incidence of childhood chronic diseases has exploded, and this trend shows no signs of reversing. The vaccination schedule in the US has grown to include more and more vaccines, given at both younger ages (Hepatitis B vaccine is routinely given on day one of life, and pregnant women are now routinely vaccinated with several vaccines) and to our seniors, who are being vaccinated with annual influenza vaccines, shingles vaccine, pneumococcal vaccine, and more.

Our work force, especially in the health care fields, is being subjected to influenza vaccine mandates even though it is well known that vaccines have side effects up to and including death. Indeed the majority of the payouts from the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program are for people injured or killed by influenza vaccines. At the same time there is NO credible research that demonstrates the efficacy of influenza vaccines at preventing influenza in vaccinated individuals or in the contacts of vaccinated individuals.

Vaccination is an inherently elective procedure that should be freely chosen or declined by individuals. Mandating an invasive medical procedure violates the natural dominion a human being has over his or her body. It is imperative that citizens have the right to decline vaccines on religious and philosophical grounds.

Medical exemptions must also be accepted without being subject to review by authorities outside the doctor-patient relationship. There has been a shift in the way medical exemptions are being handled; they are frequently being rejected by review board and administrative personnel who claim to know better than a physician what is a valid exemption. Within the past two years I have personally written two well-reasoned, valid medical exemptions for patients only to have them rejected, one by a public health department, and one by a university, even though those authorities had never met with or evaluated the patients, as I had.

When NO exception is accepted, where is a citizen to turn for autonomy over his or her bodily integrity and the right to decide what is injected and what is not? How will our society function if and when vaccine mandates spread and no profession or public place is "safe" for those wanting to decline invasive medical procedures that should be a free choice?

I strongly encourage the Committee and the Legislature to pass HB 193 and uphold the right of the citizens of our great state to accept or decline medical intervention, influenza vaccine, as they see fit.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Levatin, MD