

Testimony of Christy Jaynes
Ohio House Health Committee

Re: House Bill 559

Opposition to proposed changes to immunization exemptions and tracking processes

May 21, 2017

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and honorable members of the Health Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide opponent testimony for House Bill 559. My name is Christy Jaynes and I am a mother of four children, one of which is a severely vaccine injured child. I strongly oppose this bill for many reasons.

Firstly, it violates my First Amendment right by not allowing me to FREELY exercise my freedom of religion and deeply held beliefs. Requiring me to receive “vaccine counseling” by a health practitioner that the state deems fit at MY expense is not what I would consider “freely exercising” my First Amendment right.

Secondly, the Ohio Constitution states that no person should be compelled to participate in a health care system, however, you are forcing me to see a physician, not of my choosing, one that the state deems fit to provide education on vaccines in order to gain their signature on the exemption form.

Thirdly, I would like to touch briefly on the financial burden you are placing on Ohio parents by passing this bill. I took the time to reach out to my pediatrician, who is well aware of HB559, as he is friendly with the director at the Ohio Chapter AAP. I asked him if he would be willing to provide these doctor visits for free for the parents who wanted to file an exemption and needed a doctor’s signature. I have yet to hear back from him, but I am guessing he would not. My point being, if even the pro-vaccine doctors are not willing to do these visits for free, the financial burden is falling back on the parents, which I feel discriminates against parents who are filing an exemption. If parents who want an exemption have to go through a conversation with a pediatrician and get a form signed off, then ALL parents of school age children should have to do the same thing, which would not be feasible for any pediatrician.

Lastly, I just want to speak from my heart as a parent of a vaccine injured child. My son has been diagnosed with encephalopathy, medical term for brain damage, it’s a side effect from his

MMR vaccine. It has been by far the hardest thing my husband and I have ever been through. It has changed our lives forever. Since that day I have spent hundreds of hours, probably more, researching vaccines and the diseases they are supposed to prevent. I can say with the uttermost confidence these doctors would not be giving me any information that I do not already know. I am pro-life and was never told that there is aborted fetal DNA in vaccines, had I known that I would have never vaccinated my children in the first place as it conflicts with my deeply held beliefs. This information WOULD HAVE BEEN nice to have prior to my children receiving vaccines, however, doctors do not have the time for true informed consent and I had to educate myself after the fact. Will this information be included in the dialogue between parent and physician during this vaccine counseling? I'm guessing not. Who gets to choose which information must be discussed? How are we assuring the information is factual and unbiased? My son has a medical exemption after what happened to him, however, I still have 3 other children who would need to have an exemption signed off by a doctor. Requiring me to go to a doctor, have this person look me in the face and tell me I should still continue to vaccinate my other 3 children after what happened to my son would be the hugest slap in the face. Due to my son's brain damage, I have had to quit work when I was at the top of my career to give him the help he needs and to get him to his much-needed therapy and doctor appointments that are scheduled several times a week. My husband is a teacher and we are providing for a family of 6 on one income, the financial burden of what this bill would require is not fair to us and we feel like we are being targeted for doing what we feel is best for our family. This bill is not about better tracking, we already have a tracking system in place, it is about targeting and discriminating against Ohio families. Everyone sitting on this Health Committee today is here because your constituents voted you to your seat. Your job is to listen to these people and give them what they want, not to listen to organizations who have agendas and the medical professionals who have an enormous conflict of interest. I am asking you today not to vote on your personal beliefs, I am asking you today to uphold the First Amendment, the Ohio Constitution, and the vow you took to your constituents and vote against this bill...that is what you have been elected to do.

Thanks again for this opportunity, and I'm happy to answer any questions you have for me.