

Dear Health Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony against HB559.

As a mother of five, I used to be the parent who never missed a check up. All my kids followed the CDC vaccination schedule. I even petitioned my insurance company 3 times to cover an extra immunization not normally covered by insurance.

Then came Allie, my fifth child, who arrived at her 6 month check-up happy, smiley, and perfectly healthy. She was administered 9 vaccines, and that perfect smile would be erased for nearly a year. It started immediately with a high fever, flu-like symptoms, and rash. The rash became sores, the sores cracked open, until the skin looked as if it had been burned off her entire face. My baby screamed every night in agony as her bloody weeping face stained my clothing and sheets. Her hands were so swollen she could no longer grasp. Her head was so swollen she could barely hold it up. Her lymph node was the size of ping-pong ball. A pox-like rash covered her body from head to toe. And my little baby stopped standing. And it wouldn't go away. Allie suffered like this for months.

I expected the doctors to admit that something had gone wrong with the shots, I expected an investigation, I expected testing to discover which vaccine had caused the reaction, only to find out that no test exists. I repeat: no medical test exists to prove which vaccine caused a reaction. Had the doctors admitted the true cause of her disease as a vaccine injury, I might have continued to vaccinate with the exception of the shot in question. But sadly none if this happened.

Instead the system failed her, and she was given countless false diagnoses, some with lifelong implications, and we discussed the possibility of rare diseases and even cancer. And after months of open wounds which would not heal, they inevitably wanted to admit her for a secondary infection. Denying the correct diagnosis meant denying my child correct treatment. More of the same was only making her worse, and I feared she would die in the hospital, so I took a difficult risk and declined to have her admitted. By God's grace I found another person who treated vaccine injury. And after only 12 weeks of treatment I am happy to tell you my daughter is fully cured.

I would like to note that that Allie simultaneously received injections from Belgium, Germany, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The fact that not one lot number was investigated, despite having been manufactured in multiple facilities across the world, is beyond words.

Had the doctors been right, Allie would still be suffering from lifelong implications, but they don't exist. She has no rashes, allergies, immune disease, nor cancer. Furthermore, the CDC website itself shows the same pox-like lesions my child had, and it's even labeled as an adverse vaccine reaction on their website.

And to this day I cannot get a medical exemption for Allie. Her doctor says he cannot grant an exemption because he "wasn't there". And who was there? Because our general pediatrician immediately transferred us to allergy, to dermatology, immunology, infectious disease, back to immunology, and around and around we went. Technically speaking, I was

the only person there, but doctors won't acknowledge my account and would rather call this any other excuse, like eczema. I am amazed how easily her suffering can be diminished. If Allie cannot obtain a medical exemption, who can? The bottom line is that no doctor wants to sign that form and make themselves a target.

Luckily, the state of Ohio allows me to protect my child with religious and philosophical exemptions instead. But that didn't stop Allie's preschool from trying to remove her this year. After explaining the near-death situation to the preschool director, and reminding her that exemptions are legal in the state of Ohio, why would she still deny Allie entrance? The director stated that she feared backlash from the state - despite being no current law against it. HB559 would only add to this existing hostile environment.

And while trying to gain entrance into preschool, I learned something important about how immunization histories are recorded. According to a representative at my child's pediatric office, which is one of the largest networks, their internal software only allows two options on the record; 1: "Recorded," or 2: "Permanently Deferred, Religious or other belief". This means that adverse vaccine reactions to a particular shot would still be recorded as option 2, such as in Allie's case.

Additionally, HB559 would require me to consult a vaccine professional to use exemptions. I will have to re-live my nightmare by explaining Allie's story through her high school years. And based on my previous experiences, the doctor will likely reject my claims while trying to persuade me into risking her life again by receiving more immunizations. They have all the supposed 'facts' about vaccines yet not one of them can give me the closure of knowing what really happened to my child, and why she suffered for an entire year. This would be a huge smack in the face, which I find offensive and insulting. Also it creates the financial burden of scheduling an un-necessary doctor's visit.

To the health committee members, I pray that you support parental choice, support medical choice, support exemption rights, and support children like Allie by rejecting HB559.