

As a pharmacist, I do believe in vaccines. They play a vital role in preventing infectious diseases such as measles, hepatitis, meningococcal meningitis, and influenza. Congregate living settings, such as nursing homes, colleges, day cares, and schools play an important role in identifying outbreaks in the early stages. Vaccines provide a necessary barrier to prevent spread into the public arena. These facilities need to have the ability to monitor vaccine status and require vaccines when necessary. This is for the protection and safety of all those in their charge. And it protects the public. This bill will remove these safeguards to public health.

There are already allowances for religious and medical purposes. It is unlawful to discriminate on religious grounds. It is unethical to give a vaccine that will harm the patient. These safeguards are already in place. This part of the bill is redundant.

This bill seems to be a response to the new COVID-19 vaccine, rather than to the status quo of existing vaccination policies. As of today, none of the COVID-19 vaccines have received full approval from the FDA. I do believe that we should not be able to compel anyone to receive a vaccine that the federal government views as experimental.

That should be the focus of this legislation. Entities should not compel a vaccine that has not been fully approved by the FDA for that specific indication for that specific patient.