

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248.

My name is Orion Trist and I am an IT Professional and the reason I support House Bill 248 is because, prior to any medical procedure, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Service (“HHS”) explains that the “voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential.”<sup>1</sup> Coercion invalidates informed consent.<sup>2</sup> Infringing this right by eliminating vaccine exemptions and curtailing criticism is unethical and un-American given the following facts:

1. Immunity from Liability for Vaccine Harms. By the early 1980s, pharmaceutical companies were facing crippling liability for injuries to children caused by their vaccines.<sup>3</sup> Instead of letting these market forces drive them to develop safer vaccines, Congress passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (the “1986 Act”) which eliminated pharmaceutical company liability for injuries caused by their vaccine products.<sup>4</sup>

2. HHS Must Defend Against Any Claim of Vaccine Injury. After eliminating liability for pharmaceutical companies, the 1986 Act established the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (“Vaccine Court”), part of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, to compensate people injured by vaccines.<sup>5</sup> Under the 1986 Act, HHS is the defendant in Vaccine Court and is legally obligated to defend against any claim that a vaccine causes injury.<sup>6</sup> There is no right to discovery in Vaccine Court and HHS is represented by the formidable resources of the U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”).<sup>7</sup> In nearly every case the injured person bears the burden to prove causation.<sup>8</sup> Despite these hurdles, since 1986, HHS has paid over \$4 billion for vaccine injuries.<sup>9</sup>

8. Post-Licensure Safety. After licensure and use by the public, federal law requires that the package insert for each vaccine include “only those adverse events for which there is some basis to believe there is a causal relationship between the drug and the occurrence of the adverse event.”<sup>10</sup> Inserts for childhood vaccines include over one hundred serious immune, neurological and other chronic conditions that their manufacturers had a basis to believe are caused by their vaccines.<sup>11</sup>

Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,  
Orion Trist