

February 10, 2020

Dear Chairman Huebert,

I am writing to you today to express my support for HB 2601.

Before I became pregnant with my now 15-month-old son, I honestly could not tell you what the DTaP was or when it should be administered; I did not have any idea how many vaccinations the CDC recommended for children or at what ages they were supposed to get them. I had never heard of VAERS, or ACIP, or the NCVIA (National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986); I was blissfully unaware of the existence of the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program and how it worked. Oh, and there's a vaccine for chicken pox? And it's required for entrance to public school in Kansas? Clearly, there was a lot that I did not know.

I've spent the last two years learning not only the answers to the questions above, but answers to questions that I didn't even know existed. To be honest, I am both saddened and scared by what I've learned. The part that scares me the most has nothing to do with the illnesses that these vaccines are supposed to prevent, or even the side effects and adverse reactions that could be caused by these vaccines; it's the way that the media and those in positions of authority have trained the masses to treat anyone who dares to question the safety of vaccines. "The science is settled. Vaccines are safe and effective." These seem to be the only socially acceptable schools of thought when it comes to the topic of immunizations. Why am I labeled a "crazy anti-vaxxer" when I ask if there has been any safety studies done on the current childhood vaccine schedule as a whole? (there hasn't by the way) Why do I suddenly become a threat to my own child when I decide that they do not need to be given a shot for a disease that is transmitted only by sex and needles approximately one hour after they are born into this world? The amount of fear mongering, intimidation, and bullying that occurs every time a legitimate safety concern is voiced is disturbing, and even more so that it most often comes from those in a position of power.

My son is not yet school age but as I've made a conscious effort to learn as much as I can over the past two years on this topic, I've also made a conscious effort to stay informed on state level vaccine requirements and any legislation that would change those requirements or add/remove any exemptions. I am fully aware of what Kansas requires for entry to public school, so imagine my surprise last March when a friend of mine forwarded an email she received from the Blue Valley School District stating that the KDHE immunization program had implemented a new vaccine requirement for school entry that now included Hep A and meningitis. If the hearing to amend the vaccination requirements didn't take place until June 27<sup>th</sup>, why were letters being sent in March stating that the KDHE had already implemented these changes? What kind of power does the KDHE currently hold and why does it supersede public hearing? What was the point of holding a hearing in which hundreds of people showed up to express their opposition if the KDHE had already implemented these changes? Was it all for show?

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For the reasons above, and for so many more, I support HB 2601. One thing that I am sure of, is that with unchecked power, more vaccines will be added to the recommended schedule, more than likely followed by the loss of exemptions. If it ever comes to that, I will not hesitate to pull my child from public school just as many other parents will do, as we've seen recently in California and New York. Thank you so very much for your time and consideration on this very important topic.

Sincerely,

Lauren Titzman  
Overland Park, KS