

Dear Committee Members,

About 4 years ago, I started looking more closely at vaccines that my children were receiving. Not because our family had experienced a vaccine injury or because we had had any adverse reactions, but because my sister-in-law and a few close friends who are medical providers encouraged me to look into them more and educate myself. I did so because I was going to disprove my 'anti-vaxer' friends and family. Little did I know, that I was the one that was going to be proved wrong.

I am a registered nurse and felt I had a pretty good handle on vaccines. In nursing school, we spent a whole semester in Community Health and one of our assignments was a project on vaccines. I thought I was well versed on vaccines, and I was; well versed in what the CDC and pharmaceutical companies wanted me to know. As I dug through more and more of the research into how vaccines are derived, the ingredients used, the medical trials for the FDA, and the legal cases involving vaccine injuries, I was shocked. As a devout Catholic, the fact that some vaccines are created using aborted fetal stem cells was absolutely appalling. As an RN who took an oath to do no harm to her patients and to not administer medicine that causes harm or death was also incredibly alarming as I read about all of the vaccine injuries – I had never once informed my patients about adverse effects outside of allergic reactions and some mild symptoms. Yes, I know that there are side effects and adverse outcomes whenever any medicine or procedure is performed, but it is my job and the job of EVERY medical practitioner to FULLY INFORM the patient of these things, not just what we want to the patient to hear because of our own personal biases or beliefs. That is why I ask that you recommend a 'Do Pass' for HB1468.

I additionally ask that you recommend a 'Do Pass' on HB1468 because of a recent well child visit I had for my six-year-old son at Sanford Clinic with a nurse practitioner. I politely declined the flu vaccine in addition to the recommended schedule of vaccines for a 6-year-old. What ensued was an attack on my intelligence, religion, and authority as a parent to make decisions for my child.

I am not an anti-vaxer and neither is my husband. We believe that vaccines are good and beneficial in certain instances, and my husband and I do vaccinate our children. However, we vigorously research ALL information before deciding when and which vaccines are administered. When I asked the nurse practitioner for vaccine inserts, particular research, etc he would not provide it. The only thing he did was go speak to their staff nurse who they call the "Vaccine Queen" and stated that she told him to tell me that my religious objection was not valid because the Pope said that vaccines are good. Yes, the Pope released a statement about the efficacy of vaccinations, however the nurse practitioner and the "Vaccine Queen" failed to mention that the Pope also stated in the same document that we as Catholics are to reject vaccines derived from aborted fetuses when we can. After more 'discussion' the nurse practitioner finally let my son and I leave.

As a well-educated and well-informed mother, I was able to defend myself and my family. However, I should not have to do this with my medical practitioner. I should be able to trust that my practitioner will be objective and truthful and give me all information, even if the practitioner has a personal bias on the subject matter. I have no problem with my practitioner giving me their opinion, and I actively seek it, because I am a firm believer that I need to do my best to seek all information whether I agree with it or not. I need to be able to make the best decisions for my family and myself and I cannot do that if I am fed half-truths by individuals I should be able to trust.

Thank you for your time. Please recommend a 'Do Pass' for HB1468.

Sincerely,

McKenzie McCoy
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District 39