

Dear Committee members,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 1467.

As a mother of 6 young kids, vaccines are a very relevant topic. I want my children to be as healthy as possible. Every mother wants that. I have talked to many moms who are hesitant to vaccinate their children. And their reasons are very well founded. They don't feel like they have full access to information about vaccines to make a well-informed decision. They are threatened with being dropped as a patient, or feel intimidated into going against their intuition and vaccinating anyway.

This is absolutely the WRONG approach to improving vaccination rates.

Many of the rumors about vaccine injury are scary. As mothers, if there is any possibility of injury, or damaging side effects, we are completely fine refusing the vaccines offered. Our job is to protect our children.

However, if these rumors of injury and side effects are completely false, we need to have that information. Public health NEEDS radical transparency in order to ever regain trust in vaccines. We need to be able to see the actual number of injuries so that we can see that our doubts were not founded on truth, or so that we can make educated decisions to see if the benefit outweighs the risks. We need to see the numbers that show that vaccines are safe and effective. Simply saying they are "safe and effective" is no longer good enough.

We are long past the time when we can simply "Trust the experts." We live in the age of information, and moms like me need to be able to see the numbers for ourselves. We should be able to get the information from the ND Department of Health, and not a rumor on social media. We will not be able to trust vaccines again, until we have this transparency. Having the state of North Dakota keep records of any actual side effects or injuries related to the vaccines given in our state will help North Dakotan moms like me make the best decisions for our children. And in many cases will potentially lead to an increase in vaccines if the numbers show no injury or side effects.

North Dakota public health needs to be transparent with their citizens if they ever want to have a successful impact. Please vote YES on HB 1467.

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