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To: The Kansas State Legislature

Wednesday, January 4, 2012

RE: HB 2094 for a Conscientious Exemption to state-mandated vaccination

Although I am disenfranchised from voting in Kansas, I am still required to follow your laws concerning vaccination since I have a grandson enrolled at St. John's Military School in Salina. Therefore, I would like to present a viewpoint for those parents living out of state who have children enrolled in the Kansas schools.

I am a retired research physiologist with guardianship of a grandson who was vaccine injured. I have used Colorado's philosophical exemption to opt out of vaccination even though he qualifies for a medical exemption and is currently attending St. John's with one. I would not have sent him to your state if he would have had to make up all the immunizations.

I have studied vaccinations and vaccine injuries extensively since my retirement and do not feel that the evidence for vaccination is strong enough to mandate its use for every child in every situation. Neither do I feel all the vaccines we use today on our children are necessary or desirable. I do feel that parents are the best able to decide which of the available vaccines are suitable for their children and when they should be given.

The evidence does not at present support either the efficacy of vaccines in producing some sort of "herd immunity" in humans or in producing a strong, long-lasting immunity in individuals. States with a philosophical or conscientious exemption show no increase in disease outbreaks. Colorado has a very low incidence of childhood diseases. In an outbreak of a typical childhood disease such as chicken pox, as many as half of the vaccinated children may contract the disease; about the same percentage as among the unvaccinated children.

Most parents will continue to vaccinate their children for most or all the diseases listed on the mandatory vaccine roster, but they should be able to do so as an informed parent who has had a choice. Please consider this bill as a win/win for Kansas and its families.

Sincerely yours,

JANIS BISHOP, PhD