



Jeremy Thiesfeldt

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 52nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Limitations on Requiring and Requesting the Influenza Vaccination

by Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt

The debate over the mandatory influenza vaccinations of employees is worthy of a vigorous public airing. Much controversy has been growing nationwide as to the plight of employees, particularly healthcare workers, being dismissed from their jobs due to their refusal to accept such an unwanted intrusion into their personal healthcare decisions.

I fully recognize this argument pits two groups advocating a position based on rights against each other. Employers, primarily healthcare providers, have begun to demand flu vaccinations of employees, with extremely limited exceptions, as a fundamental right of an employer. Individuals who object will fall back on individual liberties with the choice to make their own personal healthcare decisions without the threat of dismissal.

While both arguments have merit, I fall on the side of personal liberty.

The history of vaccinations in the US has been one filled with controversy. The strongest argument in favor has been the high degree of effectiveness of many common vaccinations that reaches 90% or higher. The influenza vaccine does not enjoy this success. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that for the 2012-13 season the vaccine had a 38% fail rate. This is consistent with all the evidence from previous years putting the fail rate at anywhere from 30-50%.

Another documented fact is each year individuals nationwide have been severely harmed by submitting to the influenza vaccination, and in some cases death has resulted.

The influenza vaccine is easier than ever to obtain. Not long ago, it once required a visit to a doctor, but it now seems to be readily available in many locations. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it has resulted in the largest proportion of the population in history being vaccinated against the flu.

Do we have any less incidence of flu because of it? Not appreciably. The largest declines in incidence and deaths from influenza came prior to 1980, which is around the time the flu vaccine became widely used. In fact, a 2005 US National Institute of Health study of over 30 influenza seasons could not find a correlation between increasing vaccination coverage and declining mortality rates in any age group.

Serving the communities of Fond du Lac, Oakfield, Byron, Empire, Taycheedah, and the western half of Calumet township



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The US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommends against mandatory influenza vaccinations of employees. They state, “At this time, [OSHA believes] there is insufficient evidence for the federal government to promote mandatory influenza vaccination programs that may result in employment termination.”

For those of us concerned with the increasing erosion of personal freedoms, one must pose the question of where does this end? Which will be the next employer to mandate the flu vaccine for its employees? Schools, daycares, restaurants, grocery stores—the list could be endless. What vaccine will be next?

The flu vaccine is different each season. It is an educated guess as to what strains of the virus will be most prevalent in coming months. In spite of best efforts, often these predictions are wrong. Because of these variations, hospitals are already filled with both patients, employees, visitors and varying vendors who have been ineffectively vaccinated.

As is often the case, the financial aspect of this cannot be ignored. I take the word of healthcare professionals and administrators that their overriding concern is for patients under their care. This is as it should be. But everyone should also be aware of the powerful influences that play a role in this as well.

Threats of liability have hospital administrators spooked. The requirements of Obamacare will likely eventually push healthcare employers to reach a required plateau of immunizations of their workforce in order to receive certain bonuses or reimbursements. Pharmaceutical corporations have obvious financial interests in the mandate as well.

The solution to this dilemma is for continued work to be done to improve the effectiveness of the flu vaccines. If this is not possible, it is up to the community of health professionals to convince their colleagues that their view is the correct one. It is also clear that those opposed to the vaccine have alternative suggestions for ways to increase immunity that are worthy of exploration.

There is not likely to be a retreat from these mandates once they become fully implemented and entrenched. Qualified, experienced and excellent healthcare workers are being dismissed from their positions or simply quitting to avoid the confrontation. Many are afraid to speak out for fear of retribution. Before we simply start waiving our personal freedoms aside for “communal benefit”, it would be important for us to have this serious discussion in the light of day with all the facts on the table.

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July 2, 2012

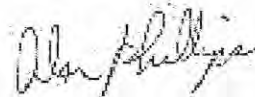
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Re: Support for Vaccine Exemption Bill for Employees

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

Thank you for your time last Thursday regarding a possible employee vaccine exemption bill. I respectfully present the attached for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to ask if I may provide you with additional information or may be of further service at any time.

Sincerely Yours,



Alan G. Phillips
State Bar No. 30436

Support for Employee Seasonal Vaccine Exemption Bill

A. Conflicting Science

1. Tom Jefferson, a Cochrane Collaboration epidemiologist who “knows the flu vaccine literature better than anyone else on the planet” has stated the vast majority of flu studies favoring seasonal flu vaccines were deeply flawed: “*Rubbish* is not a scientific term, but I think it’s the term that applies.”¹ A 2010 review of the flu vaccine literature by the Cochrane Collaboration, an independent, international consortium of medical researchers, issued a WARNING stating that “reliable evidence on influenza vaccines is thin but there is evidence of widespread manipulation of conclusions...” The review also noted that “vaccine use did not affect . . . working days lost” and “had no effect on hospital admissions or complication rates.”²

2. The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) strongly criticized proposed mandatory flu vaccine laws and corresponding mask policies for healthcare workers.³

3. The AMA and the CDC endorsed non-mandatory flu vaccine policies during the 2009-2010 swine flu pandemic.^{4,5} Exemptions outside of declared emergencies are, therefore, clearly acceptable.

4. Regarding flu vaccines, hospitals cannot reasonably object to exemptions on the grounds that some patients are immunocompromised or otherwise more susceptible to infectious disease than healthy people, since flu vaccines don’t work in 40+% of vaccinated employees (see 6. below). Moreover, the CDC claims that non-vaccinated persons may obtain natural immunity, and without even developing symptoms.⁶ The bottom line is, *vaccination status is not a reliable indicator of immune status*. That being the case, in those situations where immunity of an employee is truly critical, testing of all persons, vaccinated and unvaccinated, would have to be undertaken. (I know of no such policy anywhere). The lack of a policy requiring such procedure evidences a lack of medical necessity for flu vaccination over non-vaccination.

5. Official statistics for the 2009-2010 swine flu pandemic show that the U.S. vaccinated 30% of the population against swine flu, yet had more than 8 times its proportional share of international swine flu deaths. England vaccinated 8% of its population and had 2 times its proportional share. Poland, which refused to vaccinate for

¹ *Does the Vaccine Matter?*, <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200911/brownlee-h1n1/2>

² Vaccines for preventing influenza in healthy adults, <http://www2.cochrane.org/reviews/en/ab001269.html>

³ Letter to Colorado Public Health Officials on Mandatory Influenza Vaccine for Healthcare Workers, AAPS, Dec. 14, 2011, http://www.aapsonline.org/index.php/site/article/colorado_influenza_letter/

⁴ *AMA meeting: No flu shot mandate for doctors; hand sanitizer pushed*, <http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2009/11/23/prsd1123.htm>

⁵ Vaccine News and Commentary from the University of Pennsylvania Centers for Bioethics, <http://blog.vaccineethics.org/2010/06/cdc-declines-to-endorse-mandatory-flu.html>, citing 75 Fed. Reg. 35497 (June 10, 2010)

⁶ See, e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vaccines and Immunizations, Glossary, “Asymptomatic infection: The presence of an infection without symptoms. Also known as inapparent or subclinical infection.” <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/about/terms/glossary.htm>

the swine flu, had 1/10 of its proportional share of international swine flu deaths.⁷ These data suggest that swine flu immunization campaigns were actually counterproductive.

6. **Herd Immunity:** The CDC website cites a study suggesting that herd immunity for influenza vaccines occur with 80% vaccine coverage⁸ More recently, a study was published showing only 60% efficacy for flu vaccines, which suggests that herd immunity is unachievable with influenza at all, at least via vaccination. However, a doctor's critical review of the recent study revealed that the 60% figure represented the "relative risk reduction" (rounded up), a substantially misleading figure given that the "actual risk reduction" was only 1.5%, and the study reported that 97.3% of non-vaccinated study participants didn't contract the flu.⁹

7. In a September 2011 Position Statement, OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) stated that it "believes there is insufficient scientific evidence for the federal government to promote mandatory influenza vaccination programs that do not have an option for the HCP [healthcare professionals] to decline for medical, religious and/or personal philosophical reasons."¹⁰

B. Unknown Vaccine Safety

1. Authorities routinely assert that vaccine benefits outweigh risks. But a reliable vaccine-disease risk-benefit assessment is actually not possible, because reliable data simply doesn't exist. For example, during the recent H1N1 pandemic, the CDC reported U.S. laboratory confirmed flu deaths (both swine and seasonal) for the 2009-2010 flu season were 2,117.¹¹ However, the CDC estimated U.S. swine flu deaths alone at 8870 – 18,300.¹² In stark contrast, Flu Tracker (Rhiza Labs) estimated only 4642 fatal U.S. swine flu cases.¹³

2. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) and National Vaccine Injury and Compensation Program (NVICP) have revealed irrefutably that vaccines cause permanent disability and deaths, but they are woefully inadequate measures of the scope of the problem. The FDA and CDC have each admitted that reported adverse events

⁷ <http://www.flucount.org>

⁸ http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/12/10/05-1015_article.htm, footnote 34: Monto AS, Davenport FM, Napier JA, Francis T. Modification of an outbreak of influenza in Tecumseh, Michigan by vaccination of schoolchildren. *J Infect Dis.* 1970;122:16–25.

⁹ "Flu Shots, Fosamax and Pharmaceutical Fakery: The Common Use of Misleading Statistics in the Medical Literature," Gary G. Kohls, M.D., Dec. 3, 2011, <http://www.thepeoplesvoice.org/TPV3/Voices.php/2011/12/03/flu-shots-fosamax-and-pharmaceutical-fak?tempskin=basic>

¹⁰ National Vaccine Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, September 13-14, 2011, APPENDIX B: OSHA Position Statement, as submitted by Mr. Borwegen, representative of the Service Employees International Union, <http://www.nvic.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=da4b451c-b83e-4eb4-9b64-5c210aad1ec3>

¹¹ 2009 H1N1 Flu U.S. Situation Update, May 28, 2010, CDC, <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/updates/us/>

¹² CDC Estimates of 2009 H1N1 Cases and Related Hospitalizations and Deaths from April 2009 through April 10, 2010, By Age Group, http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pdf/graph_April%202010N.pdf

¹³ Flu Tracker, Rhiza Labs, <http://flutracker.rhizalabs.com/>

represent as few as 1-10% of the events actually occurring.¹⁴ Former FDA Commissioner David Kessler said that reported events may be less than 1%.¹⁵ Furthermore, "No data get collected, and it remains unknown whether vaccination increases the incidence of most [chronic] diseases, particularly rare diseases."¹⁶

C. Non-Medical Concerns

1. A key philosophical objection concerns whether individuals should be compelled to risk serious injury or death (from vaccines) for the presumed benefit of society (protecting self and community via herd immunity). Viewed this way, compulsory vaccination is akin to military conscription during wartime. Should children be compelled to take this risk, whereas in wartime, only adults are required to fight for their country? Reasonable people disagree; therefore, employers should not be able to impose their will on employees.

However, as noted above, the scope of the risk from vaccination is completely unknown, and herd immunity has been shown to be non-achievable for the flu via vaccination. So, the philosophical question as to vaccines is not really even valid. But even if it were valid, since medical science cannot identify those likely to suffer serious adverse events to the vaccines, compelling any given individual to vaccinate with routine immunizations is unconscionable. (Legal rights vary during declared emergencies.)

2. Imposing routine vaccines over religious objections amounts to playing "God," and should never be tolerated in a country whose founding principles include religious freedom. But the Constitution doesn't require vaccine religious exemptions,¹⁷ so First Amendment "free exercise" rights don't apply until the state offers a religious exemption. Since state religious exemption laws come with Constitutional rights that philosophical exemptions do not have, I recommend wording in the proposed exemption law include reference to both religious and non-religious (philosophical or personal) beliefs.

D. Pharmaceutical Industry Concerns

1. Dr. Marcia Angell of Harvard Medical School (2008): "It is simply no longer possible to believe much of the clinical research that is published, or to rely on the judgment of trusted physicians or authoritative medical guidelines. I take no pleasure in this conclusion, which I reached slowly and reluctantly over my two decades as an editor

¹⁴ Testimony of Bernard Rimland, Ph.D., Before House Committee on Government Reform, April 6, 2000, <http://www.whale.to/v/rimland.html>

¹⁵ Testimony of Barbara Loe Fisher, Co-Founder & President National Vaccine Information Center, U.S. House Government Reform Committee - August 3, 1999 "Vaccines: Finding a Balance Between Public Safety and Personal Choice", <http://www.whale.to/vaccines/fisher.html>

¹⁶ Associating vaccines and subsequent diseases, Meryl Nass, M.D., February 8, 2011, <http://anthraxvaccine.blogspot.com/2011/02/this-blogger-fractured-her-right-arm.html>

¹⁷ See, e.g., *Workman v. Mingo County Board of Education*, 419 Fed.Appx. 348, 2011 WL 1042330 (C.A.4(SC)), <http://www.ca4.uscourts.gov/Opinions/Unpublished/092352.U.pdf>, citing *Prince v. Massachusetts*, 321 U.S. 158, 166 (1944).

of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.¹⁸ (Publishing research is about selling drugs, not objective science...)

2. In December of 2009, the WHO reported: "Corruption in the pharmaceutical sector occurs throughout all stages of the medicines chain, from research and development to dispensing and promotion."¹⁹

3. The pharmaceutical industry has become the biggest defrauder of the federal government under the False Claims Act.²⁰ Glaxo received a \$3B civil-criminal fine in November 2011.²¹ Pfizer was assessed a \$1B criminal and \$1.3B civil fine in 2009. Fines in the \$100's of millions are common. Pharmaceutical fines have averaged around \$3B annually over the past few years, up significantly over prior years. No one should ever be required absolutely to use a product from an industry that routinely engages in criminal behavior, as a purely ethical matter.

E. Alternatives

1. Studies show that vitamin D supplements work better than vaccines at preventing the flu. Homeoprophylaxis has proven much safer and more effective than vaccines, and is much less expensive. Workers should be allowed to select safer and more effective means of addressing infectious disease concerns. [More information available on request.]

F. Additional Concerns

1. We don't necessarily need to prove the status quo wrong. It may be sufficient to provide show conflicting information and absence of data that support the proposition that citizens should have the right to choose, that there isn't sufficient clarity in the science to support corporate or state mandating seasonal vaccines absolutely.

2. Currently, most hospital employee vaccine requirements concern only the seasonal flu vaccine. But some hospitals have other requirements such as DTaP and/or MMR. There are over 330 vaccines already on the market or under development;²² there's no light at the end of this tunnel. But for now, addressing seasonal vaccines would be a big step.

¹⁸ BOOK REVIEW: Former editor of prestigious medical journal says doctors no longer deserve trust, December 30, 2008, <http://www.ufppc.org/book-notes-mainmenu-36/8218-book-review-former-editor-of-prestigious-medical-journalsays-doctors-no-longer-deserve-trust-.html>

¹⁹ Medicines: corruption and pharmaceuticals, World Health Organization Website, Fact Sheet No. 335, December, 2009, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs335/en/index.html>

²⁰ Public Citizen Study: Pharmaceutical Industry Is Biggest Defrauder of the Federal Government Under the False Claims Act, <http://www.pharmpro.com/news/2010/12/government-and-regulatory-Pharmaceutical-Industry-Is-Biggest-Defrauder-of-the-Federal-Government/>

²¹ Glaxo to pay \$3B To Settle Marketing Probes, <http://www.pharmalot.com/2011/11/glaxo-to-pay-3b-to-settle-marketing-probes/>

²² Pennsylvania Bio Issues Patient Impact Report on Vaccines, More than 330 vaccines in development or on the market to prevent life-threatening diseases, Business Wire, November 4, 2010, <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20101104006976/en/Pennsylvania-Bio-Issues-Patient-Impact-Report-Vaccines>

3. A state vaccine exemption law for employees would, theoretically, be duplicative of federal law Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) as to those employees with religious objections to vaccines, and what qualifies legally for a religious objection is quite broad. As a practical matter, though, such a state law would avoid the widespread confusion about the implementation of Title VII, and in so doing:

a. Save employers and employees time, money and frustration arguing about the proper application of Title VII to employer-mandated vaccines;

b. Avoid EEOC complaints and their consequences, including: 1) lost employment (temporary during EEOC investigations, or permanent for employees who can't afford months off from work waiting for the EEOC to go through its procedure and/or who can't afford the time and money to sue their employer), 2) employer embarrassment for discriminating against their employees, 3) federal taxpayer dollars spent resolving EEOC complaints, 4) stress and distress for employees and hospital administrators.

c. Benefit hospital patients by relieving employee stress and distress associated with being required to get vaccines they wish to avoid when confronted with a "vaccinate or terminate" option, and by avoiding temporary or permanent loss of staff who choose termination over forced vaccination.

4. A compromise may be offered, that of requiring those exercising an exemption to first talk to a medical doctor to get information about vaccine benefits before being able to exercise the exemption. WA passed a law like this last year for school exemptions; CA is considering such a law now. This is problematic for at least 3 reasons:

a. People who object to vaccines are already familiar with the "pro-vaccine" arguments; they simply find other information more persuasive;

b. Doctors giving vaccine lectures rarely provide balanced information; and

c. Some of the reasons for objecting to vaccines are not medical issues, as noted above. Therefore, medical doctors are not necessarily qualified to address those issues.



Scott Walker, Governor
John A. Scocos, Secretary

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DATE: November 13, 2013
TO: Assembly Committee on Health
FROM: John A. Scocos, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
SUBJECT: Position Statement Re: Assembly Bill 247

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) opposes AB 247. Beginning with this year's flu season, the Department adopted the policy that all employees of our Veterans Homes must be immunized against influenza or wear a facial mask if not immunized.

The Department has three Veterans Homes, serving 991 veterans and spouses. The vast majority are elderly, with approximately 85% over the age of 85 years.

The elderly population is often "immune-compromised" and not always able to safely receive the flu shot. In addition to the elderly, cancer patients, transplant recipients, and individuals who are HIV-positive are not able to be immunized. They, therefore, count on their healthcare workers who come into daily contact with them to receive the flu vaccination to create a safe, infection-free environment.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report that flu vaccination prevents the transmission of disease and saves lives of vulnerable populations like the elderly, plus the CDC recommends that all U.S. health care workers get vaccinated annually against influenza.

It should be noted that for decades healthcare facilities have, in vain, attempted to increase compliance with employee flu vaccinations by employing various incentives and educational programs, but to no avail. Compliance rates historically hovered at about 60%, which is not high enough from an epidemiological standpoint, to stop the spread of infection. Many states have now mandated by law that healthcare workers receive the flu vaccination and compliance rates in these states have risen to around 98%, which is high enough to achieve "community immunity" according to epidemiologists.

Prior to this year's change in policy, employees were immunized at a rate of 60-70%. Since implementation of our new policy, 98% of employees have opted to receive the vaccine, while only 2% elected against immunization.

We believe our policy mandating employees are immunized or wear a facial mask, and the compliance achieved this flu season, is an important step forward in safeguarding the health of the residents of our Veterans Homes.



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Scott Walker, Governor
Kitty Rhoades, Secretary

November 13, 2013

Assembly Committee on Health

2013 AB 247 relating to: limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza

WI Department of Health Services Position: testifying for information only

My name is Renee O'Day and I am the Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health Services. I am testifying today for informational purposes only regarding AB 247. The Medicaid program reimburses certified health care providers which deliver health care services for people with limited resources, and is funded through a combination of state and federal tax dollars. In fiscal year 2013-15, the state of Wisconsin is budgeted to spend \$4.7 billion GPR and \$16.2 billion AF on Medicaid. This represents 23.8% of our state budget expenditures (AF).

Within the Medicaid program, the Department of Health Services reimburses fee for service hospitals based upon 7 different reporting and performance measures. These "pay for performance" measures are an effort to improve quality outcomes and move Medicaid from a system of volume to value. Pay for performance is an effort to increase accountability and promote program integrity in Wisconsin's Medicaid program.

Since vaccination of healthcare personnel is sufficiently important to patient safety, during the 2012-13 flu season the WI Division of Healthcare Access and Accountability added healthcare personnel flu vaccination rates as a metric in the fee for service hospital pay for performance program. Approximately 130 hospitals throughout the state, including a mixture of large and small, urban and rural fee for service hospitals, participate in the pay for performance program.

The Department of Health Services has incorporated federal standards into its pay for performance program to avoid duplication of requirements at the federal and state levels. DHS has worked with hospitals in a cooperative way such that the hospitals understand the program and its methodology, which is published on the DHS website. When hospitals submit Medicaid-reimbursable fee for service claims to DHS, 1.5% of the reimbursement is initially withheld but can be earned back based upon performance. Currently, healthcare personnel flu vaccination is a self-reported measure with the goal of achieving the national average healthcare personnel vaccination rate, 66.9%. By 2016 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) will require hospitals to meet the federal flu vaccination reporting standard for hospitals participating in CMS' Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) program. Even if this bill becomes law, hospitals will still need to comply with federal requirements regarding flu vaccination for Medicare-reimbursable claims.

AB 247 could potentially prevent many hospitals from successful participation in pay for performance goals, which were designed to enhance health care value delivered with the citizens' tax dollars. Furthermore, it could hinder hospitals from improving patient safety, quality of care and employee productivity.



Wisconsin Chapter | POSITION STATEMENT

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Recommendation for Mandatory Influenza Immunization of All Health Care Personnel

Background: Influenza is a serious disease and a significant public health concern. It can lead to severe illness, hospitalization and even death. Those who are most vulnerable- young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with underlying medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, immune disorders) are at highest risk for severe complications.

Health Care Personnel may unknowingly transmit disease to their patients before they develop symptoms. Two such instances include disease transmission from hospital staff in a neonatal intensive care unit and a bone marrow transplantation unit, resulting in severe illness and pediatric deaths^{i ii}

It is known that the influenza vaccine is not 100% effective in every individual. The effectiveness (ability to prevent illness) can vary from season to season. Effectiveness depends on how closely the strains in the vaccine match the viruses in the community. The vaccine produces a stronger immune response in healthy adults and often people at highest risk (such as the elderly) have the poorest response to vaccine. It is therefore extremely important to immunize Health Care Personnel who care for them.

In order for the vaccine to be beneficial, high immunization rates (>80%) are vital in order to provide the "herd immunity" needed to have a significant impact on influenza transmission in health care settings. An additional benefit is decreased absenteeism due to illness of Health Care Personnel.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control continues to show that health care organizations cannot rely on voluntary influenza immunization programs. During the 2012-13 influenza season, overall coverage for influenza vaccination among health workers was only 72%, but has risen gradually as more health facilities require employees be immunized. Coverage among health care workers who worked in a facility requiring influenza immunization was 96.5%, while those that neither required nor promoted influenza vaccine was only 50.4%ⁱⁱⁱ.

Most medical institutions have requirements for immunization or proof of immunity against other communicable diseases such as chicken pox, measles, pertussis and Hepatitis B^{iv}. Influenza should be no different. Immunization of Health Care Personnel against influenza helps prevent transmission of disease to vulnerable patients. Many professional medical organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics also support mandatory influenza immunizations for Health Care Personnel.

Position: The Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WIAAP) supports mandatory immunization of Health Care Personnel against influenza as we have an ethical responsibility to protect vulnerable patients.

Resources

First Do No Harm: Mandatory Influenza Vaccination Policies for Healthcare Personnel (HCP) Help Protect Patients

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2014.pdf>

American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement: Recommendation for Mandatory Influenza Immunization of All Health Care Personnel

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/4/809.full#ref-13>

Immunization of Health-Care Personnel. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6007.pdf>

Influenza Immunization Among Health Care Workers. Improving Dismal Influenza Vaccination Rates Among Health Care Workers Requires Comprehensive Approach, Institutional Commitment. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. <http://www.nfid.org/content-conversion/pdf/publications/calltoaction.pdf>

ⁱ Cunney RJ, Bialachowski A, Thornley D, Smaill FM, Pennie RA. An outbreak of influenza A in a neonatal intensive care unit. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol.*2000;21(7):449-454

ⁱⁱ Weinstock DM, Eagan J, Malak SA, Rogers M, Wallace H, Kiehn TE. Control of influenza A on a bone marrow transplant unit. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol.*2000;21(11):730-732

ⁱⁱⁱ Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Health-Care Personnel – United States, 2012-2013 Influenza Season. *Mortality & Morbidity Weekly Report.* September 27, 2013 / 62(38); 781-786.

^{iv} Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Recommendations. Immunization Action Coalition. <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2017.pdf>

**Committee on Health
Representative Erik Severson, Chair**

**Testimony of Bruce Van Cleave, M.D., Chief Clinical Officer and
David Smith M.D. Vice President Patient Experience & Care Management,
Aurora Health Care**

2013 Assembly Bill 247

Relating to: limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza.

**Room 225 Northwest, State Capitol, Madison, WI
Wednesday, November 13, 2013, 1:00 p.m.**

Chairperson Severson and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear on behalf of Aurora Health Care to testify regarding 2013 Assembly Bill 247, which prohibits employers from demoting, suspending, discharging, or otherwise discriminating against an employee for refusing to be vaccinated against seasonal influenza.

My name is Dr. Bruce Van Cleave and I am the Chief Clinical Officer of Aurora Health Care. I have worked as a physician and healthcare administrator for more than 30 years. Aurora is Wisconsin's largest private employer with over 30,000 employees. We are also Wisconsin's largest not-for-profit, health care provider that offers integrated health care services throughout 90 eastern Wisconsin communities and three communities in Northern Illinois. Our organization is comprised of 15 hospitals, 172 clinics, 70 pharmacies, a hospice center, a social service agency and Wisconsin's largest home visiting nurse association. We care for approximately 1.2 million patients annually.

As a health care provider, we do all we can to protect the health and safety of caregivers and patients, including requiring that all caregivers receive the annual flu vaccination as a condition of employment.

The seasonal flu is a serious disease and people of any age can get it. Infection can result in mild to severe illness and life-threatening complications. In an average year, the seasonal flu causes 36,000 deaths and 226,000 hospitalizations in the United States.

Vaccinations keep our patients safer. Health care workers are commonly exposed to influenza virus infection and often serve as sources of influenza virus for their patients. Often times caregivers can be healthy carriers of influenza and unknowingly expose patients to the disease. In fact many instances of in-hospital influenza outbreaks have been associated with unvaccinated caregivers. Getting a flu vaccination is one of the most effective ways to help prevent unnecessary deaths and stem the spread of this preventable disease.

The influenza vaccination is one of many safety measures Aurora caregivers are required to take to protect our patients. Employees of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit are required to obtain the Rubella vaccination to ensure vulnerable babies are not exposed to this dangerous

virus. Aurora also requires employees to be tested for managed for exposure to tuberculosis. As health care professionals, we have a responsibility to act in the best interest of our patients and protect them from exposure to this deadly virus.

Flu vaccinations keep caregivers healthy and ensure that they are available to serve the community in times of increased demand, such as the flu season. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended influenza vaccination for all health care workers since 1981. The Center for Disease Control and Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices have called for vaccinating all Americans except in cases of medical or religious contraindication or for children less than 6 months of age. The CDC specifically recommends vaccinations for caregivers who serve patients at risk of developing serious complications people with certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease.

Additionally, following the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, multiple organizations including the Infectious Diseases Society of America and National Patient Safety Foundation issued statements supporting mandatory influenza vaccination for health care workers as a means to protect patients, fellow HCWs, and the community.

Chairperson Severson and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify. My name is Dr. David Smith and I serve as Vice President, Patient Experience and Care Management for Aurora Health Care. I've been a practicing physician for 31 years and also hold a Master's in Public Health. I would like to share information about the success of Aurora's influenza vaccination program.

Aurora began conducting an annual, voluntary influenza vaccination program for employed caregivers in 1996. This program offered free, onsite vaccine administration to all employees. Multiple interventions took place through 2010 to encourage our employees to be vaccinated. We plateaued in the mid-70% range, leaving over 20% of our employees susceptible to influenza.

During the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, health care workers were identified as a particularly high priority population to vaccinate. In response, Aurora engaged in unprecedented community and internal publicity, education, and other efforts to improve employee influenza vaccination rates. These efforts did not result in higher vaccination rates from the previous 2 years. In fact, only 41% of the system's health care workers received the H1N1 vaccine. Despite publicity and education during the 2009 influenza pandemic, caregivers did not adhere to internal or external calls for vaccination putting the health care workforce and our patients at risk.

Aurora adopted the "condition of employment" strategy in 2011 as a proven and acceptable intervention to reach nearly universal influenza protection of patients and employees. Under this new policy, caregivers were allowed to request exemptions from the requirement, specifically for medical or religious reasons.

As a result, for each of the past three years including 2013, 98% of Aurora's 30,048 employees have received influenza vaccine. This was and remains a tremendous increase from the 71% vaccination rate of the 2010 season. Each year, several hundred employee exemption requests have been received and reviewed by a multidisciplinary committee which I chair. In these three

years, we have received 823 medical requests and 181-religious requests. Of these, 84% of the medical waivers and over 50% of the religious waivers were accepted.

The adoption of an influenza vaccination policy as a condition of employment was received well by the vast majority of our employees and continues to be a successful patient safety intervention for the system

We respect and care about the well-being of our employees and patients. Vaccination policies are the most effective way to protect both. We respectfully request that you oppose AB 247, as it will inhibit our ability as the largest health provider and employer in the state to keep our patients and caregivers safe.

Aurora has proven that we can effectively protect our patients from unnecessary exposure to the influenza virus with little disruption to our employees. This bill seeks to erode the safety and health of Wisconsin residents. We ask that the committee seek ways to improve the health of our communities, rather than restrict it through legislation such as Assembly Bill 247.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



DATE: Wednesday, October 13, 2013
TO: Representative Severson, Chair
Members, Assembly Committee on Health
FROM: Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin

SUBJECT: 2013 Assembly Bill 247 relating to influenza vaccine administration employer requirements

Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin Position: OPPOSE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Assembly Bill 247 (AB247) which, if enacted, would prohibit employers from requiring and requesting influenza vaccine administration for employees. The Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin (PSW) is a nonprofit professional association representing nearly 3400 pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and student pharmacists in the state of Wisconsin. We seek to improve the health outcomes and well-being of patients in Wisconsin, to serve as a unified voice for our members and the practice of pharmacy, and to advance the pharmacy profession. With that commitment to improving patient care outcomes and promoting public health, we oppose AB247.

Pharmacists have been administering vaccines in the State of Wisconsin since 1997. During the 2012-2013 influenza season, over 230,000 doses of influenza vaccine were administered in Wisconsin pharmacies.ⁱ Nationally, over 20% of adult patients receive their influenza vaccine at a pharmacy, a percentage second to that of a doctor's office, which is the most common place of vaccination (38.4%).ⁱⁱ However, despite providing an additional access point for vaccination, the immunization rate for the 2012-2013 influenza vaccine was only 40.6% in Wisconsin and 45% nationally.ⁱⁱⁱ This is significantly below the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy People 2020 goal of 70%.^{iv}

Employer mandates of influenza vaccine administration provides another opportunity for improving vaccination rates. In fact, studies evaluating employer mandated vaccination reveals increases in rates by over 45%.^v In the health care setting, this is essential for reducing influenza-related illness among health care providers and their patients. Indeed, vaccinating health care providers against influenza is a well studied intervention that has demonstrated a substantial decrease in patient mortality. PSW members remain committed to serving as immunizers in the community and support efforts to increase immunization rates in all settings.

Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin leadership and members request your opposition to Assembly Bill 247.

ⁱ Wisconsin Immunization Registry. Doses administered and reported to the Wisconsin Immunization Registry 2012-2013 season.

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Place of influenza vaccination among adults - United States, 2007-08 through 2011-2012 influenza seasons. MMWR 2013; 62(ss04):1-29.

ⁱⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. FluVaxView influenza vaccination coverage. Available at: www.cdc.gov/flu/fluvoxview/. Accessed October 20, 2013.

^{iv} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthy People 2020. Available at: www.healthypeople.gov. Accessed October 20, 2013.

^v Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Influenza vaccination coverage among health-care personnel - United States, 2012-13 influenza season. MMWR 2013; 62(38):781-786.



WI Director of Nursing Council

November 13, 2013

Chairman Severson and Committee Members:

I am here on behalf of the WI DON Council, Inc. which is an association of 190 long term care Directors of Nurses and long term care nurses. In addition to this, I am also the Director of Nurses at Dove Healthcare in Eau Claire WI. I have come here today to testify in opposition of AB 247.

As an industry we are heavily regulated and have federal, state, and OSHA aggressively looking at our practices. There is even a federal regulation that states I must follow accepted Standards of Nursing/ Medical Practice. So I adopt those standards from entities like the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to guide my decision making for nursing practice when it comes to communicable disease prevention, transmission control and treatment. The federal regulation specifically states: "The facility must establish and maintain an infection control program designed to provide a safe, sanitary and comfortable environment and to help prevent the development and transmission of disease and infection." This regulation goes on for another 51 pages to explain how the facility is to meet this expectation.

Because I follow those standards my employees in the health care environment must accept procedures that are deemed necessary to protect the resident that we care for from our illnesses and procedures that protect the employee from the resident illnesses. In the case of influenza, these protective measures are immunization and the wearing of a mask. It is no wonder that every health care association has written in opposition of this bill because it is written with disregard for documented standards of practice.

This bill minimizes the risk of influenza A, it ignores the immunization for Influenza A as an important part of protecting both the resident and the employee and the bill misunderstands the effectiveness in the use of personal protective equipment called the mask. Let me further explain the definition of personal protective equipment. It can be equated to the football player who wears a helmet. That helmet protects the player from serious injury. The mask is our football helmet and protects the employee from serious illness. The federal government's definition of a PPE is: refers to protective items or garments worn to protect the body or clothing from hazards that can cause injury.

As we enter the healthcare field, healthcare professionals are introduced to the responsibility to be immunized or screened for a variety of communicable disease and at each step there are avenues for the employee to make choices. Those choices all come with caveats. For example, if you want to work in surgery you will need to be accepting of the PPEs required in that environment. Let me make it personal for a minute as I worked in surgery for 8 years. I wore a mask and a hat over my hair for all

those years. It was to protect the patient. We would not dream of letting a healthcare worker walk into a surgical suite without a mask, scrub suit and other PPEs as required by the standards of practice in that environment. This is no difference.

Now let's bring it back to the bill. AB 247 has the ability if passed to impact every long term care facility's ability to protect their residents and their staff. I have spoken with many communities and most of them have flu immunization programs that provide education, free immunization and choices. If a facility or other health care entity has deemed that their patient or resident population is so medically compromised that special steps must be taken to protect that population then it should be the decision of the health care provider based on standards of medical practice. It is there responsibility to put in place procedures that are appropriate. The health care entity should not be forced at the hand of the government and a small group of supporters to put in place procedures that endanger those people that are entrusted to us for their care.

I really don't believe anyone of the attendees here today would be accepting if an employee was allowed to care for a frail loved one when that employee may endanger that loved one's life. That is how dangerous the Influenza virus can be. I also don't think that the attendees would think it prudent of an employer to allow its employees to put themselves in harms way by not wearing a mask when that employee would be more susceptible to contracting the Influenza virus.

I usually am very leery about sharing what others might or might not think or do. In this case I am confident because it is about common sense implementation of science based standards of practice. I have provided the committee with copies of our regulation, the CDC recommendations and the definition of PPE.

Thank you for your time today.

Joey Pettis, RN, DON-CLTC, WCC, DWC
Executive Director
WI DON of Nurses Council, Inc.

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F-TAG #	REGULATION	GUIDANCE TO SURVEYORS
F441	<p>§483.65 Infection Control</p> <p>The facility must establish and maintain an infection control program designed to provide a safe, sanitary, and comfortable environment and to help prevent the development and transmission of disease and infection.</p> <p>§483.65(a) Infection Control Program</p> <p>The facility must establish an infection control program under which it—</p> <p>(1) Investigates, controls, and prevents infections in the facility;</p> <p>(2) Decides what procedures, such as isolation should be applied to an individual resident; and</p> <p>(3) Maintains a record of incidents and corrective actions related to infections.</p> <p>§483.65(b) Preventing Spread of Infection</p> <p>(1) When the Infection Control Program determines that a resident needs isolation to prevent the spread of</p>	<p>INTENT: (F441) 42CFR 483.65 Infection Control</p> <p>The intent of this regulation is to assure that the facility develops, implements, and maintains an Infection Prevention and Control Program in order to prevent, recognize, and control, to the extent possible, the onset and spread of infection within the facility. The program will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform surveillance and investigation to prevent, to the extent possible, the onset and the spread of infection; • Prevent and control outbreaks and cross-contamination using transmission-based precautions in addition to standard precautions; • Use records of infection incidents to improve its infection control processes and outcomes by taking corrective actions, as indicated; • Implement hand hygiene (hand washing) practices consistent with accepted standards of practice, to reduce the spread of infections and prevent cross-contamination; and • Properly store, handle, process, and transport linens to minimize contamination. <p>DEFINITIONS</p> <p>Definitions are provided to clarify terminology or terms related to infection control practices in nursing homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Airborne precautions” refers to actions taken to prevent or minimize the transmission of infectious agents/organisms that remain infectious over long distances when suspended in the air. These particles can remain suspended in the air for prolonged periods of time and can be carried on normal air currents in a room or beyond, to adjacent spaces or areas receiving exhaust air.¹ • “Alcohol-based hand rub” (ABHR) refers to a 60-95 percent ethanol or isopropyl- containing

F-TAG #	REGULATION	GUIDANCE TO SURVEYORS
<p>F441 cont.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)” refers to Staphylococcus aureus bacteria that are resistant to treatment with semi-synthetic penicillins (e.g., Oxacillin/Nafcillin/Methicillin). • “Multi-Drug resistant organisms (MDROs)” refers to microorganisms, predominantly bacteria, that are resistant to one or more classes of antimicrobial agents. Although the names of certain MDROs describe resistance to only one agent, these pathogens are frequently resistant to most available antimicrobial agents.⁵ • “Outbreak” is the occurrence of more cases of a particular infection than is normally expected, the occurrence of an unusual organism, or the occurrence of unusual antibiotic resistance patterns.⁶ • “Personal protective equipment” (PPE) refers to protective items or garments worn to protect the body or clothing from hazards that can cause injury. • “Standard precautions” (formerly “Universal Precautions”) refers to infection prevention practices that apply to all residents, regardless of suspected or confirmed diagnosis or presumed infection status. Standard Precautions is a combination and expansion of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Isolation (a practice of isolating all body substances such as blood, urine, and feces).⁷ • “Surveillance” refers to the ongoing, systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data to identify infections and infection risks, to try to reduce morbidity and mortality and to improve resident health status. • “Transmission-based precautions” (a.k.a. “Isolation Precautions”) refers to the actions (precautions) implemented, in addition to standard precautions, that are based upon the means of transmission (airborne, contact, and droplet) in order to prevent or control infections. • “Vancomycin resistant enterococcus (VRE)” refers to enterococcus that has developed resistance to vancomycin.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why did Memorial Hermann decide to implement a new vaccination policy this year?

Protecting the health and well-being of our patients has always been a priority at Memorial Hermann. Our new policy requiring a mandatory flu vaccination or the wearing of a surgical mask supports that priority. We know that getting a vaccination remains the single most effective preventative measure against the flu. Unfortunately, our *voluntary* vaccination programs have not achieved acceptable levels sufficient to impact transmission of the flu by healthcare workers in the medical setting. We are also following the lead of many other healthcare systems across the nation as well as locally that already have mandatory vaccination policies. Our policy also puts us ahead of a new state law that goes into effect in 2012 requiring healthcare facilities to establish mandatory immunization policies for all workers who come into contact with patients.

2. Why am I required to get a flu shot?

We are accountable and committed to improving patient safety and our quality of care, particularly infection prevention in the healthcare setting during the flu season. We know we can protect patients from getting the flu by interrupting transmission of the disease by getting all those who work in a medical setting vaccinated or having them wear a surgical mask during the flu season. As a healthcare organization and as a matter of public health, we must lead by example to prevent the spread of flu.

3. Who is required to get a flu shot?

To reach our goal of 100 percent compliance with our policy – all Memorial Hermann *employees, volunteers, students, third party vendors, and contracted staff* who work in a *patient care facility*, or are required to visit a *patient care facility* as a part of their scope of work – are required to be immunized against influenza.

4. What if I choose not to get the flu shot?

If you elect not to have the vaccination, you must express that choice via a Declination form. In such case, you will need to wear a surgical mask during the influenza season in *patient care facilities in accordance with the mask wearing guidelines*.

5. Why do I have to wear a surgical mask?

For those who elect not to have the flu vaccination, wearing a mask is the required alternative. A mask serves as a method of source control of those infected healthcare workers who may have no symptoms and it can also protect unvaccinated healthcare workers from infected patients or visitors with influenza.

6. Why does Memorial Hermann encourage vaccination over wearing a mask?

Vaccination is the most effective preventative measure against the flu. Even one infected healthcare worker in contact with one vulnerable patient can cause harm and even death. Based on our understanding of immunity principles, a greater than 90% vaccination rate produces the necessary level of immunity to impact transmission of flu by healthcare workers in the medical setting. While wearing a mask is an acceptable alternative, it is less convenient than getting the vaccine. The vaccine is necessary only one time per influenza season and offers protection throughout the season while at work and at home with your family and friends.

7. If I decline the flu shot or refuse to wear a mask will I be terminated?

It is our goal to have the safest environment for our patients. We cannot reach that milestone without your support. Towards that end, if a Memorial Hermann employee, who is covered by this policy, refuses to complete a Declination form or fails to comply with the use of a surgical mask as required in a *patient care facility*, he/she will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

8. If I decline the flu vaccination, when do I start wearing the mask?

An e-mail will be sent with guidelines outlining when to start wearing the mask. But we expect that we will begin asking the unvaccinated individuals covered by this policy to start wearing their masks on or about December 1, 2011.

9. How long am I required to wear the mask?

We want to protect our patients throughout the flu season, so you must wear the mask until conclusion of the flu season – on or about March 31, 2012. An e-mail will be sent announcing when masks are no longer required.

10. What are the guidelines for wearing a surgical mask during flu season

The guidelines are simple and easy to follow. If you work in or visit a *patient care facility* you must wear a surgical mask at all times when within six (6) feet of a patient. You also must wear a mask when attending meetings/group gatherings in a patient care facility or when within six (6) feet of patients receiving care. The mask should be changed at least every shift and when soiled or compromised.

11. What do I say if a patient or a visitor asks: “Why are you wearing a mask?”

We understand that you may be asked the reason why you are wearing a mask during flu season. Simply state that – Memorial Hermann is dedicated to protecting the safety of our patients, visitors and staff. Tell them you are doing your part to prevent the spread of the flu by interrupting transmission of the disease by wearing a surgical mask during the flu season.

12. What locations are considered patient care facilities?

Patient care facilities include all Memorial Hermann hospitals, outpatient centers, prevention and recovery centers, neighborhood health centers, rehabilitation centers, wellness centers, emergency care centers, home health centers, and retirement community and nursing centers.

13. If I complete a declination form and change my mind, can I still get a flu shot?

Absolutely, if you change your mind, please contact your local Occupational Health Department and we will be happy to administer the vaccination.

14. How much is the flu shot?

The vaccine will be free of charge.

15. Where do I get the flu shot?

Various locations will be announced, including the Occupations Health Departments at all hospitals.

16. When is the flu season?

The designated flu season is October to the end of March.

17. When will the flu shot be available?

The flu vaccination will be administered the first week of October. When the vaccine is available at your facility, an email will be sent system wide informing everyone when and where to get the flu shot at their designated hospital or clinic.

18. How will my manager know I got the flu shot?

Everyone who receives the influenza vaccination will be required to wear a sticker on his/her badge throughout the designated flu season, which signifies that the individual has received the influenza vaccination.

19. Will my manager know I declined the flu shot?

Yes, managers will be provided this information so they will know who needs to comply with the requirement to wear a mask. However, managers will not know the reason for declination.

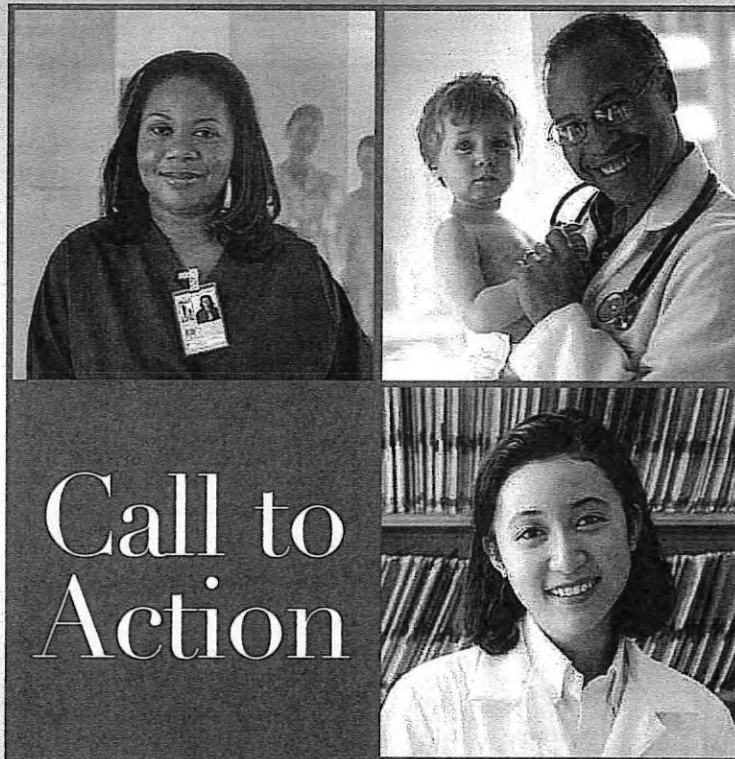
20. What if I get the flu shot from another source (e.g. Walgreens)?

You will need to keep and show written documentation to Occupational Health that you received the vaccination in order to receive a badge sticker demonstrating that you received the shot.

21. Have other hospitals implemented mandatory influenza vaccination policies?

Yes, Memorial Hermann is not alone in implementing a mandatory influenza immunization program. Several hospitals in Houston and many across the United States have initiated similar policies. As healthcare providers, it is our obligation and responsibility to protect the safety of our patients, staff, visitors and the community. We are happy to join other hospitals in this public health effort.

Influenza Immunization Among Health Care Personnel



Improving Low Influenza Vaccination Rates
Among Health Care Personnel Requires Comprehensive
Approach, Institutional Commitment

Made possible by an unrestricted educational grant to the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases from sanofi pasteur



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RESEARCH PREVENTION EDUCATION

Influenza Immunization Among Health Care Personnel

Improving Low Influenza Vaccination Rates Among Health Care Personnel Requires Comprehensive Approach, Institutional Commitment

A continued, concerted effort by health care institutions, employers, insurers and allied professional organizations is essential to improve influenza vaccination rates among health care personnel (HCP).^{*} Since the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) published its first "Call to Action" on this topic in 2004, many health care organizations have issued recommendations that HCP receive annual influenza vaccine.¹⁻⁶ Despite these recommendations, influenza immunization rates among HCP have not greatly improved. Rates have fluctuated in recent years, but even at their highest (42 percent in 2004 and 2006), they remain unacceptably low.¹

Health care personnel can spread the highly contagious influenza virus to patients in their care.⁷⁻⁹ In fact, unvaccinated workers can be a key cause of outbreaks in health care settings. This is particularly troubling for the many patients at high risk for influenza-related complications, hospitalization and death.¹

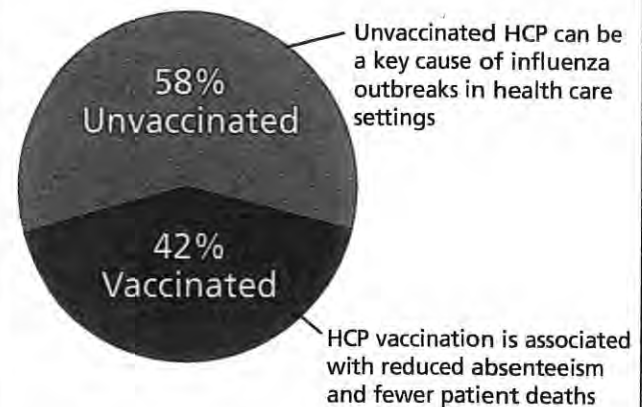
Since NFID first raised the issue of low influenza vaccination rates for HCP, groups such as the Joint Commission (formerly the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations),² the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC),⁴ the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA),⁵ the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)⁶ and the National Influenza Vaccine Summit, among others, have taken steps to alert the immunization community to the important public health goal of vaccinating individuals who work in health care settings.

The Joint Commission has had a standard in place since 2005 requiring accredited hospitals and long-term care facilities to offer influenza vaccinations to staff, including licensed independent practitioners and volunteers.² Accredited organizations are required to establish annual immunization programs to educate employees about influenza and offer vaccine on site. At this time, the Joint Commission is reviewing its standard and is considering options to strengthen it.

^{*} In the context of this document, the term "health care personnel" extends to all persons working in health care settings, including home health care, who have contact with patients. This includes not only traditionally identified medical staff (e.g., physicians, nurses, physician assistants, etc.), but also therapists, technicians, laboratory personnel, pharmacists, students and trainees, volunteers and non-medical personnel who may come into contact with vulnerable patients (e.g., housekeeping, plant operations, dietary, secretarial, administrative, etc.).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that health care facilities offer influenza vaccine to employees annually, provide vaccine at the work site at no cost and use the level of HCP influenza vaccination coverage as a measure of their patient safety quality program.^{1,3} CDC also suggests that institutions encourage vaccination by obtaining signed statements from workers who refuse it.^{1,3}

Average Annual Influenza Vaccination Rates in Health Care Personnel



Source: CDC. Prevention and control of influenza: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2007. *MMWR*. 2007;56(RR-6):1-54.

Only about four in 10 HCP receive influenza vaccine each year, while nearly six in 10 remain unvaccinated, contributing to institutional outbreaks that put vulnerable patients at increased risk of contracting influenza and suffering from its potentially major complications.

IDSA supports mandatory annual HCP influenza immunization while allowing workers to decline for religious, philosophical or medical reasons.⁵ Alternatively, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine acknowledges that influenza vaccination is the most tangible and measurable strategy to control transmission of influenza between patients and staff, but does not feel mandatory vaccination is justified.¹⁰ The annual immunization program recommended by SHEA includes educating HCP about the severity of influenza and correcting mistaken beliefs about the vaccine (that it causes the flu, for example).⁶ Regulations regarding HCP influenza vaccination now exist in several states:

influenza vaccination is mandatory in three states and must be made available in three states.¹¹

Despite these efforts, vaccination rates remain too low and patients continue to be needlessly placed at increased risk. Therefore, NFID strongly encourages other professional, consumer and accrediting groups to increase their commitment to HCP influenza immunization and strengthen their health care standards and practices.

Influenza Outbreaks in Health Care Settings

Documented outbreaks illustrate the problem of influenza transmission between HCP and patients:

- An outbreak in an organ transplant unit affected four patients. Each was in a single room and three of the four had no visitors to account for the spread. Three of 27 nurses also developed influenza.¹²
- Sixty-five residents in a long-term care facility developed influenza A. Over half developed pneumonia, 19 were hospitalized and two died. Only one out of 10 HCP was immunized.¹³
- In a neonatal intensive care unit, 19 infants were infected and one died. Health care personnel were the likely source of the spread. Only 15 percent of staff had been immunized.¹⁴

Influenza Immunization Offers Economic Benefits

Preventing influenza spread between HCP and patients will not only contribute to societal cost savings, but will also reduce the economic impact for individual institutions. As an example, in an influenza outbreak in an internal medicine ward, 23 percent of staff became ill, resulting in 14 person-days of sick leave, postponement of eight scheduled admissions, suspension of emergency admissions for 11 days and an average additional cost per patient of \$3,798.¹⁵ The total outbreak cost was \$34,179. Another problem for institutions that likely has an economic impact (though it is not easily quantified) is that peers, often working double shifts, or pool workers, must replace HCP who do not report to work due to influenza illness.¹⁶

Influenza Immunization Reduces Patient Mortality

Influenza vaccination of HCP in nursing homes and institutions is associated with lower patient mortality rates:

- Staff offered influenza vaccine in 22 of 44 nursing homes was more likely to be immunized (48 vs. 6 percent). Significantly fewer patients in the facilities with higher immunization rates were admitted to the hospital with influenza-like illness and significantly fewer patients died.¹⁷
- In 12 geriatric medical long-term care facilities, a staff influenza immunization rate of 61 percent was associated with significant reductions of about 40 percent in total patient mortality and influenza-like illness.¹⁸

What's Needed

Employers of HCP need to commit resources to institutionalizing immunization in the workplace. They need to demonstrate that immunization of HCP is critical to patient safety, and will protect HCP themselves, their families and close contacts.

Institutions must break down vaccination barriers to increase HCP immunization rates. Mobile vaccination cart programs have increased influenza vaccination rates among employees from less than 25 to 65 percent.¹⁹ After the Mayo Clinic offered free vaccine, vaccinated coworkers at their work sites and during grand rounds, and used a gift incentive program, influenza immunization rates rose to 76 percent.¹⁹ Standing orders have also been shown to improve vaccination rates.²⁰

A variety of approaches on the part of top management/administration can help increase rates and lessen the burden of influenza illness in HCP:

- Make influenza vaccination convenient
 - Offer vaccine clinics at various times
 - Take the vaccine to employees
- Reduce or remove cost barriers by providing vaccine free of charge
- Remind HCP that the CDC recommends influenza vaccination annually
- Educate HCP that
 - Vaccines cannot cause influenza
 - Influenza virus is easily transmitted and they are putting their patients, themselves and their families at risk.

Organizational Supporters

The following organizations agree that improving annual influenza immunization rates among HCP is an important public health goal for the protection of HCP and their close contacts, including their at-risk patients.

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- American Association for Homecare
- American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
- American College of Physicians
- American Health Care Association
- American Hospital Association
- American Medical Association
- American Medical Directors Association
- American Nurses Association
- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
- America's Health Insurance Plans
- Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Cleveland Clinic
- International Society for Vaccines
- The Joint Commission
- Kaiser Permanente Northern California
- National Association of Directors of Nursing Administration/Long Term Care
- National Center for Assisted Living
- National Medical Association
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
- Virginia Mason Medical Center
- Visiting Nurse Associations of America

About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases is a non-profit, tax-exempt (501c3) organization founded in 1973 and dedicated to educating the public and health care professionals about the causes, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases.

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E-mail: info@nfid.org

This document is available online at: www.nfid.org

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Suggested citation:

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Influenza Control Policy – Wearing Masks

1. **What is the mask policy?**
2. **Why are we using masks for unvaccinated workers?**
3. **What type of mask should be worn?**
4. **How will we know who should be wearing a mask?**
5. **Where are masks required and how long should they be worn?**
6. **When do masks need to be changed?**
7. **What is the mask policy during an outbreak?**
8. **What do I do if I see a colleague who has not been immunized, but is not wearing a mask?**

1. **What is the mask policy?**
 - The most effective method of protection against influenza infection and transmission remains vaccination.
 - As a condition of employment with the health authority, all staff are required to either be vaccinated each year or, for those staff unable or unwilling to receive immunization, wear a surgical mask when in patient care areas, during the designated “vaccination required period,” typically from the end November to the end of March.
2. **Why are we using masks for unvaccinated workers?**
 - Masks can serve as a method of source control of infected health care workers who may have no or minimal influenza-like illness symptoms.
 - Masks may protect unvaccinated health care workers from as yet unrecognised infected patients or visitors with influenza.
 - Masks in conjunction with hand hygiene has been shown to have reduced rates of influenza like illness in residents of college dormitories and households.
 - Masks can filter influenza virus to undetectable levels when measured at a distance of 20 cm from an infected patient.
3. **What type of mask should be worn?**
 - Surgical or procedure masks are recognized for use in this policy. These have been shown to be effective in source reduction in several studies and have been shown in a randomized controlled study to be as effective in prevention of transmission of influenza as N-95 respirators in the acute care setting.
4. **How will we know who should be wearing a mask?**
 - Health care workers who are unable to receive the influenza vaccine or who refuse vaccination will be required to wear a surgical mask when in a patient care location during the vaccination required period (when influenza is circulating in the community).
 - All immunized staff will be required to wear an identifying sticker indicating that they have been immunized. Staff not displaying the sticker will be required to wear a mask.

5. Where are masks required and how long should they be worn?

- Unvaccinated health care workers are required to wear a mask when in patient care locations. Only areas such as cafeterias and lunch rooms reserved for the consumption of food are exempt. Unvaccinated workers would also not be required to wear a mask in administration-only areas, including a private office, where patients are not present.

6. When do masks need to be changed?

- There is no set time where masks should be changed. Masks should be changed when overly moist.
- Appropriate disposal of used masks into waste receptacles and hand hygiene protocols should be followed when removing or replacing a mask. Masks are being worn primarily for source reduction and prevention of transmission to others; this is in contrast to use of masks as personal protective equipment as part of routine practices and additional precautions to prevent transmission of infections in healthcare settings.
- Routine practices include use of respiratory protection, hand hygiene and other measures to protect workers, patients and others in the healthcare setting. The use of masks for routine practices and additional precautions should continue as part of an effective infection prevention and control program and is not replaced by this policy.
- For example, if a mask is required as part of personal protective equipment for providing care to a patient with a droplet transmitted infection, the appropriate procedures (including hand hygiene, use of eye protection, gowns, etc.) should be followed, including putting on a new mask prior to patient contact and taking off the mask after the patient contact.
- If a health care worker is unvaccinated they must then put on a new mask before providing care to another patient.
- If airborne precautions are required (for example when caring for a patient with TB), then the mask should be substituted for an N-95 respirator and usual infection control practices for airborne precautions followed.

7. What is the mask policy during an outbreak?

- While the use of masks in conjunction with hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene reduces the risk of influenza transmission, this remains secondary in effectiveness to influenza vaccination.
- During a facility influenza outbreak this policy is suspended and standard policies regarding the use of exclusion and antiviral medications will apply.

8. What do I do if I see a colleague who has not been immunized, but is not wearing a mask?

- Please remind them of their responsibility to their patients and ask them to wear their mask so they don't transmit infection. Encourage each other with all aspects of the policy including hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and staying home when sick.
- If they continue to ignore the policy, you are asked to report this behaviour to your supervisor, in a similar way that you would with any other patient safety policy.

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WISCONSIN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.



Date: November 13, 2013

To: Members – Assembly Committee on Health

From: Kelly Court, Chief Quality Officer – Wisconsin Hospital Association *KC*
Kyle O'Brien, VP Government Relations – Wisconsin Hospital Association *KO*

Re: AB 247 – Prohibiting Influenza Vaccinations as a Condition of Employment

Wisconsin hospitals and health care providers are proud of providing some of the highest quality care in the nation. In fact, Wisconsin was recently recognized as the second best state in the nation on overall health care quality. Our high levels of quality care are the result of hospital, health systems and providers working in a systematic way to improve patient safety and the care they provide.

Reducing influenza transmission from health care personnel to patients has become a top priority both nationally and in Wisconsin. Wisconsin hospitals have been very diligent in establishing precautionary measures to avoid the spread of diseases like influenza among employees and patients. Evidence shows that people can be spreading the disease to others before they realize they are sick. The flu is a serious and potentially fatal disease. **Last year nearly 3,000 individuals in Wisconsin were hospitalized due to the influenza virus, with 400 of those patients being so sick they required care in a hospital intensive care unit (ICU).**

By not controlling the spread of influenza we are exposing Wisconsin residents to unnecessary hospital stays, increased health care spending and lost employee productivity for Wisconsin manufacturers and businesses. Added time away from work through extended and preventable hospital stays can cause financial strain on family budgets.

The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) is opposed to AB 247 because it prohibits businesses from implementing conditions of employment that protect employees and patients. **The legislature should not be interfering with important human resource policy decisions of employers that are based on clinical experiences and proven standards of quality patient care.**

Hospitals and health care providers use a variety of policies, campaigns and promotional programs designed to maximize their personnel vaccination rates. Some hospitals have achieved targeted goals using these strategies, others have not. WHA believes that each hospital and health system must have the ability to determine and implement the approach that will be the most successful in their work environment and community. We believe this flexibility is critical for the safety of patients and to maintain the high quality of care that Wisconsin is known for.

WHA is opposed to this bill which restricts an employer from using the best human resource policy to achieve patient safety goals and to prevent hospital acquired infections. WHA asks you to oppose this legislation.



TO: Assembly Committee on Health
Representative Severson, Chair

FROM: Ann Lewandowski, Coordinator
Southern Wisconsin Immunization Consortium

DATE: November 13, 2013

RE: **OPPOSE** Assembly Bill 247 – Relating to limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza.

The Southern Wisconsin Immunization Consortium (SWIC) serves Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland, Sauk and Columbia counties in southern Wisconsin in their mission to improve rates of childhood immunizations. I thank you for this opportunity to express our opposition to Assembly Bill (AB) 247, which seeks to place limits on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza.

SWIC is a multi-sector partnership between schools, public health, and health plans (Dean Health Plan and Unity) in the area. In 2010, the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative in conjunction with Dean Health Plan and Unity Health Insurance identified particularly low childhood immunization rate for Dean and Unity enrollees in southern Wisconsin.

I am writing in opposition of AB 247 as a patient, vaccine advocate, and health professional. I grew up with healthcare and have chosen to make it my profession. My parents owned their own small practices. To build their businesses and serve their patients, my parents sacrificed many things family vacations, time off, free weekends, and evening hours to name a few. Their sacrifice was based on the Hippocratic Oath: to do no harm. If they placed their own needs above that of their patients, they would have failed their oath. AB 247 undermines this basic principal of health care. It prohibits the mandatory use of basic infection control measures like vaccinating health workers or requiring them to wear a mask if they refuse immunization.

In an era where DNA sequencing can trace where infection occurred, AB 247 forces small businesses – like my parents – to assume greater liability should their employees refuse the flu shot or other reasonable infection control measures. This bill is ultimately about personal freedom, and I fully support personal freedom. No one is forced to enter the healthcare workforce; it is a free choice made by the individual. Those who elect to serve as care providers cannot place their beliefs above other's health, unless there is a valid medical reason for doing so. Any person in healthcare who chooses personal freedom over the health of their patients ultimately fails to uphold their oath, ethical responsibility, and patient's trust by potentially harming those seeking care when they are most vulnerable. Those who are most fragile, our elders and children are at greatest risk for infection, complication, and death from the flu. Therefore, it is with the strongest conviction that I urge you to place the needs of the many, specifically our most fragile citizens, above the choice of a few by voting against this bill.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on and express our opposition on AB 247. We encourage the Committee to not take further action on this bill. This proposal will ultimately jeopardize the health of patients in rural Wisconsin.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to the Assembly Health Committee today (11/12/13). I am Joe Boero MD and I am licensed to practice medicine in the State of Wisconsin. I am an Internist and I am certified as a Medical Director of nursing homes by the American Association of Medical Directors. My practice experience encompasses over 30 years in primary care with an emphasis in treatment of residents in nursing homes. Today I will represent the sentiments of the Wisconsin Association of Medical Directors in regard to AB 247. My testimony will highlight 5 points and a short anecdote.

1. The morbidity and mortality in residents of long term care (LTC) institutions due to influenza does not depend on the rate of influenza immunization among the residents.
2. These cumulative complications of flu related illness are directly associated with the influenza immunization rate of the employees that work in the long term care facility and expose themselves to the residents during the flu season.
3. Since 2005, the Wisconsin DPH has had a goal of reaching 80% staff influenza immunization rates among all long term facilities and that goal has proved difficult to reach. During the 2011-2012 flu season only 112 LTC centers had reached this goal.
4. There is existing precedent in long term care facilities to require employees' mandatory co-operation in other equally important infection control efforts. In 2012, Wisconsin DPH in conjunction with Wisconsin Coalition on Health Care Associated Infections in Long Term Care (Wis HAI-LTC) administered a survey to over 400 LTC centers in the state of Wisconsin. 278 Wisconsin institutions responded with the following information.
 - A. Among the respondents 26% of long term care institutions require staff to have immunization or have proof of immunity to Hepatitis B.
 - B. 13% require staff to have immunization or proof of immunity to Varicella virus.
 - C. 16% require staff to have immunization or proof of immunity to measles, mumps and rubella infection.
 - D. 35% already require staff to receive vaccination against seasonal influenza and 98% of all responding LTC facilities supply the vaccine to employees at no cost.
 - E. Finally, 100 % of respondents require all staff to be screened for tuberculosis at time of hire and 66% of centers require all staff to be tested annually for TB.
5. At the 2012 annual meeting of the Wisconsin State chapter of the American Medical Association (WAMD) the membership approved a resolution stating that the policy of WAMD is that Long Term Care institutions should require employees to receive annual seasonal influenza immunization as condition of employment except in instances of medical contraindication or religious belief.

Sincerely,
Joe Boero MD
1691 County Road J
Custer, WI 54423
dr.boero.pfrmc@gmail.com
715 592 3765

W. A. M. D.



November 13, 2013

To: Representative Erik Severson, Chair
Members, Assembly Health Committee

From: John Sauer, President/CEO
Tom Ramsey, Vice President of Public Policy & Advocacy

Subject: 2013 Assembly Bill 247

Position: **Opposition to Assembly Bill 247**

LeadingAge Wisconsin is a statewide membership association of not-for-profit organizations principally serving seniors and persons with a disability. Membership is comprised of 195 religious, fraternal, private and governmental not-for-profit corporations which own, operate and/or sponsor 172 nursing homes, 7 facilities for the intellectually disabled, 182 assisted living facilities, 102 apartment complexes for seniors, and over 300 community service agencies which provide programs ranging from Alzheimer's support, child and adult day care, home health, home care, and hospice to Meals on Wheels. LeadingAge Wisconsin members employ over 38,000 individuals who provide compassionate care and service to over 48,000 residents/tenants/clients each day.

For health care providers, Assembly Bill 247 is not about employer or employee rights. It's about resident/patient rights, specifically the right to a safe environment. Passage of AB 247 would threaten the safe environment that residents of long-term care facilities expect and deserve.

- **"The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year."**
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "Key Facts About Seasonal Flu Vaccine"
(www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm)

The remainder of this testimony will focus on a single premise: Flu vaccines are safe, are effective, and can save lives. By prohibiting health care providers from mandating their employees receive flu vaccinations, AB 247 jeopardizes the well-being of both those employees and the patients/residents they serve. That premise is supported by the following:

- "We can each have our own opinion, but we must start with one set of facts: 1) Influenza vaccines are safe; 2) Influenza vaccines are effective; 3) Unvaccinated health care workers (HCW) spread influenza to their patients; and 4) Hospitalized and other vulnerable patients can have prolonged hospitalizations, severe illnesses, and can die as a result of influenza transmission from HCWs. *These facts are clear and unambiguous!*" Gregory A. Poland, MD, Director, Mayo Vaccine Research Group and Mayo Immunization Clinic, Rochester, MN, from *HCW Influenza Immunization: A Patient Safety and Quality of Care Imperative*, FOCUS 2009, Wisconsin Dells

- "Influenza immunization of health care workers is already recommended by the CDC – it is the 'standard of care!' It has been officially recommended since 1981, it has depended upon personal preference and the idea that HCWs would 'do the right thing' – They aren't . . . and it isn't working." Gregory Poland, FOCUS 2009
- " *Voluntary* HCW influenza immunization has 'skyrocketed' from 15% to 40% over the last 27 years . . . this is unacceptably low. FACT: Let's acknowledge that voluntary immunization programs have never resulted in high immunization rates, in any setting, for any age, at any time, for any reason, in any location, with any vaccine. IT DOES NOT WORK! The data are clear and unambiguous." Gregory Poland, FOCUS 2009
- "The vaccination of HCWs must be regarded more as a matter of meeting *professional and ethical standards* than of personal preference . . . unvaccinated HCWs who are not on antiviral prophylaxis should be excluded from direct patient care." Orr P. Canadian Journal of Infect Dis and Med Micro 2000
- "The directors of the Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) have voted to endorse mandatory influenza vaccination for healthcare professionals who have direct contact with patients."
- The Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA) determined in 2009 that required annual influenza immunization of HCWs is now considered the standard of care by IDSA.
- The U.S. Department of Defense *requires* all active duty personnel to receive annual influenza vaccinations. An April 2008 Secretary of Defense memo read: "All civilian HCWs working with DoD must receive annual influenza vaccination. This is a patient safety and quality of care issue."
- Effective January 1, 2007, the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) issued a standard for healthcare organizations to "establish an annual influenza vaccination program, evaluate vaccination rates and reasons for nonparticipation in the immunization program at the unit level, and implement enhancements to the program to increase participation."
- "MY PERSONAL OPINION: This is a leadership issue. This is a credibility issue. This is an ethical/moral issue. If the data supporting an intervention that is safe and effective AND improves patient morbidity, mortality, safety, and quality of care and these data are robust and demonstrated repeatedly over decades – we really have no viable excuse not to apply the intervention to the benefit of our patients." Gregory Poland, FOCUS 2009, on mandating HCW flu vaccinations.
- 24 Wisconsin healthcare organizations have signed a memo asking the members of the Legislature to oppose AB 247.

- "Before things get hectic this holiday season, and before we gather with family and friends, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is encouraging people to get a flu shot. 'Certainly no one wants to be sick during the holidays, and they don't want to be responsible for spreading an illness, either,' said Dr. Henry Anderson, State Health Officer." November 11, 2013 DHS press release "This Holiday Season, Share the Joy, Not the Flu"
- "Everyone who is at least 6 months of age should get a flu vaccine this season. This recommendation has been in place since February 24, 2010 when CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted for 'universal' flu vaccination in the United States to expand protection against the flu to more people . . . It's especially important for some people to get vaccinated: People who are at high risk of developing serious complications (like pneumonia) if they get sick with the flu, i.e., people 65 years of age and older; People who live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications: health care personnel." CDC *Seasonal Flu Shot* – Questions and Answers (www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/flushot.htm).
- "Can the flu shot give me the flu? No, a flu shot cannot give you the flu. There are several reasons why someone might get flu-like symptoms even after they have been vaccinated against the flu: 1) People may be exposed to an influenza virus shortly before getting vaccinated or during the two-week period that it takes the body to gain protection after getting vaccinated. This exposure may result in a person becoming ill with flu before the vaccine begins to protect them; 2) People may become ill from other (non-flu) viruses that circulate during the flu season, which can also cause flu-like symptoms; 3) A person may be exposed to an influenza virus that is not included in the seasonal flu vaccine." CDC *Seasonal Flu Shot* – Questions and Answers
- "When health care facilities receive high rates of health care worker influenza vaccinations, patient mortality can be reduced by up to 50%. No other single step taken by health care workers reduces patient mortality to that extent." Dr. Jeffrey Davis, Chief Medical Officer and State Epidemiologist for Communicable Diseases and Emergency Response, Wisconsin Division of Public Health, from the DHS Division of Public Health webcast "Health Care Worker Influenza Vaccination: A Matter of Patient Safety."
- "CDC and the Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH) recommend that **all residents and employees** of long-term care facilities receive annual influenza vaccination as soon as influenza vaccine becomes available." October 16, 2013 memo from Thomas Haupt, M.S., Division of Public Health, "Reporting, Prevention and Control of Acute Respiratory Illness Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Facilities"
- In 2012, LeadingAge Wisconsin, Wisconsin Hospital Association, Wisconsin Medical Society, Wisconsin Health Care Association, and Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin formed the *Wisconsin Healthcare Influenza Prevention Coalition*. "To protect the lives and welfare of patients and employees, improve quality and reduce health care costs," the Coalition adopted a position encouraging all members "to implement an evidence-based vaccination initiative to achieve a vaccination rate of >95 percent" as part of their comprehensive approach to prevent health care-associated infections. **In support of this goal, coalition members recommend**

that influenza vaccination become a condition of employment and maintenance of medical staff privileges. The Coalition has designed a Health Care Personnel Influenza Vaccination Implementation Toolkit to help its members achieve the 95%+ vaccination rate goal.

Please listen to the expertise of the individuals and organizations listed above. Please oppose AB 247.



Wisconsin Medical Society

Your Doctor. Your Health.

TO: Assembly Committee on Health
Rep. Erik Severson, MD, Chair

FROM: Mark Grapentine, JD
Senior Vice President - Government Relations

DATE: November 13, 2013

RE: Opposition to Assembly Bill 247

On behalf of more than 12,000 members statewide, the Wisconsin Medical Society thanks the committee for this opportunity to share our comments on Assembly Bill 247. The Society strongly opposes the bill, as it would prohibit health care providers from being able to implement a flu vaccination requirement for their employees. The Society supports health care organizations' and health care employers' ability to promote better patient safety when crafting flu vaccination policy for their workplaces.

The Society's opposition to Assembly Bill 247 stems from our desire to protect the health of the public, the fact that flu vaccines are effective, the need for health care organizations to be able to maintain clinical quality in their workplaces and centers of care, the fact that health care workers are already used to immunization requirements, and our worry that the bill sends the wrong message regarding vaccines.

Desire to protect the health of the public

Even in the era of modern medicine, tens of thousands of people in the United States die from the flu every year and hundreds of thousands more are hospitalized. In an average year the seasonal flu causes 36,000 deaths in the United States.

Fortunately, getting a flu vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent unnecessary deaths and stem the spread of this preventable disease. Flu vaccines work, and keep the patients our physician members care for safer. Flu is extremely contagious, which adds to the importance of vaccinations. Forty percent of those exposed to the flu will actually contract the disease. A serious concern to health care organizations is that not all of those who are infected end up with all the manifestations of the flu, meaning that many who otherwise feel and appear healthy will never even know they are influenza carriers – and therefore unknowingly pass the flu along to those who are vulnerable. In a health care environment especially this has serious consequences.

Flu vaccines are effective

Seasonal flu vaccines generally have effectiveness rates between 50 and 70 percent. While this rate is lower than some vaccines it is nonetheless quite effective while efforts continue to improve effectiveness. In fact, the vaccine's efficacy rate among most healthy working adults is closer to that 70 percent mark. The flu vaccine is our best tool to protect the sick, old and young from this very serious disease. Policy makers should not implement legislation interfering with the best practices to keep patients safe.

Maintain clinical quality in workplaces and centers of care

The key to having a successful immunization program is having high immunization rates. Mandatory requirements in health care workplaces are the most effective means of ensuring that those who care for sick and vulnerable patients are vaccinated. Estimates are that during the 2010-2011 flu season 63.5 percent of health care workers received a vaccination. But among facilities where vaccinations were required, that number jumps to 98.1 percent. Key among these flu vaccination percentages is that an 80 percent immunization rate begins to have the most impact on protecting patient health. Voluntary flu vaccination policies appear to fall short of this goal – which is why more health care employers are implementing workplace flu vaccination policies similar to other vaccination policies already in effect.

Health care workers are already familiar with immunization requirements

Health care workers are already familiar with immunization requirements and their role as health care professionals having a responsibility to act in the best interest of their patients. This responsibility includes getting a flu vaccine much like the many other vaccinations health care professionals are already required to receive or prove.

Health care workers are on the front lines of prevention for those whose immune systems are compromised. As a result, most health care employers already require as a condition of employment that their employees receive or provide proof of immunization against pertussis, Hepatitis B, chicken pox, and measles. Health care employers' decision to extend the requirement to the flu vaccination is one based on science and the CDC Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices recommendations, which calls for a universal vaccination position.

AB 247 sends the wrong message regarding vaccines

The flu vaccine is safe and effective; the Society is concerned that AB 247 fosters unneeded concerns contradicting established science. Skepticism over vaccinations endangers the public not just in cases of influenza outbreaks, but other communicable – and preventable – diseases as well. The timing of this bill is also truly unfortunate as the medical world urges the public to get their flu vaccine: according to the CDC, flu activity most commonly peaks in January or February, but seasonal flu activity can commence as soon as October. Now is the time for people to embrace getting vaccinated against influenza, rather than become confused about the issue through unwarranted, non-evidence-based claims.

The Society's paramount concern is the well-being of Wisconsin's patients. To promote that well-being, the Society believes health care organizations and health care employers should retain the ability to decide what flu vaccination policies to implement in their workplaces. Vaccination policies are the most effective way to protect the patients of Wisconsin and the legislature should not interfere with a best practice for flu prevention.

Thank you for this opportunity to share the Society's opinions on these issues. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact us at any time.



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TO: Representative Erik Severson, Chair and Members of the Assembly Health Committee
FROM: Gina Dennik-Champion, MSN, RN, MSHA
Wisconsin Nurses Association Executive Director
Date: November 13, 2013
RE: Opposition to AB 247 – Prohibition on employer requiring influenza vaccination of employees

The Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on AB 247 which addresses the limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza. As WNA reviewed this legislative proposal we find that the inclusion of employees who provide care to clinically compromised individuals is worrisome and has a degree of risk.

WNA believes that although the employer retains the authority to remove an employee showing signs and symptoms of being infected with the influenza virus that will not prevent patient exposure to the virus. The Center for Disease Control reports that individuals are infectious one day before symptoms occur and 5 – 7 days thereafter. Trying to differentiate between a “common cold” and the influenza virus during the first few days creates risk to the vulnerable patient. Employer awareness that an unvaccinated health care provider can transmit the influenza virus and cause harm to their compromised patient, nursing home resident, home care client or children in the school setting prior to symptomatology or shortly thereafter is a known risk that can be prevented.

It is for this reason that WNA opposes AB 247.

Thank you Chairperson Severson for holding this hearing on AB 247. Please feel free to contact me if you or your Committee members have any questions.

November 12, 2013

The Honorable Erik Severson, MD
State Representative
Chair – Assembly Committee on Health
Via electronic submission

Dear Dr. Severson:

As health care leaders, we are offering this letter of opposition to Assembly Bill 247. Ascension Health is the largest non-profit health care provider in the United States. In Wisconsin, Ascension offers excellent and accessible health care under the regional names of Columbia St. Mary's, Ministry Health Care and Affinity Health System, where together our nineteen hospitals, more than one hundred clinics and approximately 17,000 associates serve patients across our state every day. The three tenets of Ascension Health Care are:

1. Health Care That Works
2. Health Care That is Safe
3. Health Care That Leaves No One Behind

As a commitment to these three tenets, we require annual influenza vaccinations for our associates. Our policies supporting this were developed in accordance with guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Our policies are not unique across health care providers in Wisconsin or the United States. A requirement for health care workers to receive vaccinations is becoming the standard of care. All associates are given the alternative opportunity to comply with the flu requirement through receipt of an approved medical waiver (using CDC criteria for contraindication) or religious waiver (based on sincerely held religious beliefs).

It is the responsibility of Ministry Health Care, Columbia St. Mary's and Affinity Health System to provide safe care to patients in a manner that minimizes the risk of communicable disease transmission, and in correlation to OSHA, DHS and CDC guidelines/regulations. In addition to keeping our patients safe, we also have an interest in keeping our workforce healthy, so they can continue to provide care in the unfortunate event of an epidemic.

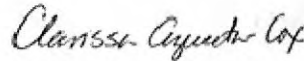
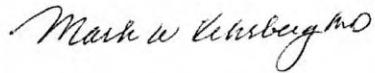
We are blessed to have been born in a generation that escaped the Great Influenza of 1918, which took the lives of so many people. Over time, some have shifted from viewing vaccinations as protection against deadly illness and conducting a public health service, to instead as a strictly personal choice. While we respect many individual and personal choices our associates make, our first responsibility is to provide a safe and healthy environment for our patients and associates.

The Honorable Erik Severson, MD
November 12, 2013
Page 2 of 2

We appreciate your consideration of our opposition to AB 247.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Mark Kehrberg, MD, MS
Chief Medical Officer
Ministry Health Care
Affinity Health System

Clarissa Azcueta-Cox, RN, MBA, CCM
Vice President, Quality & Clinical Integration
Columbia St. Mary's

C: Members, Assembly Committee on Health



TO: The Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Health

FROM: Siddhartha Singh, MD, MS, *Associate Chief Medical Officer and Associate Professor of Medicine (General Internal Medicine)*
Kathryn A. Kuhn, *Vice President of Government and Community Relations*

DATE: November 13, 2013

RE: Assembly Bill 247, relating to limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza.

On Wednesday, November 13th, 2013, the Assembly Committee on Health is scheduled to hold a public hearing on Assembly Bill 247, legislation prohibiting health providers from effectively requiring Influenza vaccinations in Wisconsin. The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) strongly opposes this legislation and respectfully requests your opposition to the bill.

Influenza (the flu) is a leading cause of death and hospitalization in the United States. As such, influenza causes up to 40,000 deaths a year, and more than 200,000 hospitalizations annually. The most vulnerable populations include the very young and the elderly with chronic diseases. The flu is highly contagious, and can be easily transmitted from healthcare providers to the sick and most vulnerable.

The influenza vaccine is very safe and does prevent the spread of influenza. Mandatory vaccination programs dramatically increase the numbers of individuals receiving vaccination. Without vaccination, forty percent of those exposed to the flu will contract the disease. Disease transmission is especially difficult to prevent without vaccination, as infected carriers may be otherwise healthy and unaffected, while unknowingly and simultaneously passing the disease onto others. In fact, many instances of in-hospital influenza outbreaks have been associated with unvaccinated healthcare workers.

Mandated vaccination is in line with the following ethical principles of the healthcare profession, which include: Prioritizing patient interests over one's own; the duty to 'first do no harm'; the requirement to protect those who cannot protect themselves; and the obligation to set a good example for the public. MCW believes that mandatory influenza vaccination programs greatly benefit our patients and our community and are in line with the ethical principles of the healthcare professions.

Finally, a large number of well-respected professional medical societies endorse mandated influenza vaccination programs for healthcare workers. A partial list includes the: *American Academy of Family Physicians; American Academy of Pediatrics; American College of Physicians; American Hospital Association; American Medical Directors Association; American Pharmacists Association; American Public Health Association; Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.; Infection Disease Society of America; National Foundation for Infectious Disease; National Patient Safety Foundation; and Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.*

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact Siddhartha Singh, MD, MS, Medical College of Wisconsin Associate Chief Medical Officer and Associate Professor of Medicine at ssingh@mcw.edu, or Kathryn Kuhn, Vice President of Government and Community Relations at 414.955.8217 or kkuhn@mcw.edu if you have any questions.



TO: Chairman Severson and Members of the Committee on Health
FROM: Michael Gutzeit, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
DATE: November 13, 2013
RE: AB 247: Limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 247, which includes limitations on requiring and requesting vaccination against influenza. My name is Mike Gutzeit and I am a pediatrician and chief medical officer at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Children's Hospital of Wisconsin is a nationally recognized, free-standing academic pediatric organization dedicated to the health and well being of children.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin serves children from every county in the state. We have inpatient hospitals in Milwaukee and the Fox Valley. We care for every part of a child's health, from critical care at one of our hospitals to routine checkups in our primary care clinics. Children's also provides specialty care, urgent care, emergency care, school health nurses, foster care and adoption services, family resource centers, child health advocacy, health education, pediatric medical research and the statewide poison hotline.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin opposes Assembly Bill 247. At Children's Hospital of Wisconsin we serve the most vulnerable and immune-challenged population. As health care professionals, we have a responsibility to act in the best interest of our patients and provide the best and safest care to them and therefore we believe it would be irresponsible for us to not require and request employees to become vaccinated.

The seasonal flu is a serious disease and people of any age are susceptible. Infection can result in mild to severe illness and life-threatening complications. In an average year, the seasonal flu causes 36,000 deaths and 226,000 hospitalizations in the United States. From October 2004 to September 2012, 830 pediatric influenza-associated deaths have been reported. The median age of the patients is seven years old. Of 794 children with a known medical history 43% had no high-risk medical conditions. These children had a significantly higher likelihood to die, before even being admitted to the hospital and within three days of symptom onset, than children with high-risk medical conditions.

The flu is not only dangerous, but also highly contagious. Forty percent of those exposed to the flu will become ill. But not all who are infected end up with all the symptoms; some who are otherwise healthy will never know they carry the flu, and therefore pass it on to those who are very vulnerable - particularly the frail elderly and the very young.

Health care workers (HCWs) are often exposed to influenza virus infection, become infected and then serve as potential sources of influenza virus for their patients. Many instances of in-hospital influenza outbreaks have been associated with unvaccinated HCWs. Getting a flu vaccination is one of the most effective ways to help prevent unnecessary deaths and stop the spread of this preventable disease. Vaccinations keep our patients safer.

Children's has required vaccination of its staff to promote immunity to certain communicable diseases for many years and to provide the safest care to our patients and families. Our policy expands Children's vaccination protection program to include the influenza virus and is aligned with similar system-wide employment and credentialing policies. The annual influenza vaccination requirement decreases the likelihood that patients, clients, families, staff, and others at Children's will acquire seasonal influenza disease.

Chairman Severson and committee members, I thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.



Testimony 11/13/13

Vicki Arndt of Milwaukee Wisconsin

Since becoming a nurse in 1995, I have dedicated my life to advocating for patients in acute care settings. Managing in the surgery department, protecting patient rights and advocating for patients in the perioperative setting is my area of expertise. Patients have the right to refuse treatment. It can be conflicting to go into a heart surgery with a Jehovah's witness who refuses blood products, and risks their life. A cancer patient may refuse painful treatments choosing not to suffer. Respecting a patient's right to refuse certain care is core to a nurse's belief system. This right to refuse certain medical care should be extended to health care workers. After evaluating the risks and benefits of flu vaccination, and making a personal decision that the risks outweigh the benefits, a health care worker should not have to risk losing their employment. I did not sign up for the military where I signed my rights away and agreed to subject myself to vaccination(s).

I was denied both medical and religious exemptions at Aurora Health Care (see exhibit 1). I was terminated on January 3, 2012 for not complying with the mandatory vaccine policy and lost my employment as a nursing manager after 9 years of progressive advancement and success in the organization. I currently have a pending Equal Rights Division complaint against them (ERD Case CR201200198). My current employer, ProHealth Care has also denied my medical and religious exemptions, and I am facing another difficult decision about having to make a decision of whether I adhere to my moral and ethical beliefs about vaccine, or succumb to unwanted, risky, and harmful forced medical care to save my financial and economic well-being.

Since becoming a nurse I voluntarily submitted to annual flu vaccinations, believing I was doing what was right for myself and the community I served. However, after receiving the 2009 H1N1 vaccine I began experiencing symptoms of narcolepsy. Narcolepsy is a very stigmatizing condition, and I was very discreet about it, especially being in a leadership position. In 2010 learned there was a European outbreak of Narcolepsy that was tied to the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. While the CDC acknowledges this connection, it claims there were no reports in the US. In this report, you will note the CDC believes an adjuvant in the vaccine (not used in the US) was to blame for the outbreak and there were no reports of narcolepsy in VAERS in the US. Yet I personally reported such a reaction to VAERS, which is searchable and in the data.

My western medicine doctor who diagnosed the narcolepsy was not willing to link the condition to vaccine (despite the reports in Europe). He was happy to prescribe me controlled substances to keep me awake and pills to help me sleep. It was a horrible time of my life. I began to seek alternative care where I was able to discontinue this aggressive treatment that left me feeling awful, in favor of more complementary and natural remedies, including the power of belief, herbal supplements, and acupuncture. I no longer suffer narcolepsy symptoms after the care of Ms Perri. (see Exhibit 2)

My family also suffers from chronic disease. My niece is autistic, which has been linked to vaccine. My mother, sister, and nephew suffer from demyelinating diseases which are also linked to vaccine. I suffered symptoms of narcolepsy- correlated at a time when there was a breakout of narcolepsy linked

to flu vaccine. I should have the right to make a decision for myself, that I do not have to be subjected to forced vaccine. Philosophical exemptions should be allowed. I no longer wish to subject myself to flu vaccine.

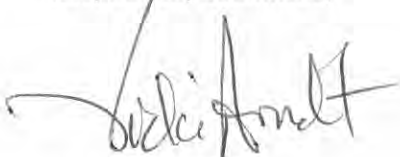
In the medical community there is the theory of herd immunity:

^[1]*Herd immunity (or community immunity) describes a form of immunity that occurs when the vaccination of a significant portion of a population (or herd) provides a measure of protection for individuals who have not developed immunity. Herd immunity theory proposes that, in contagious diseases that are transmitted from individual to individual, chains of infection are likely to be disrupted when large numbers of a population are immune or less susceptible to the disease. The greater the proportion of individuals who are resistant, the smaller the probability that a susceptible individual will come into contact with an infectious individual. Vaccination acts as a sort of firebreak or firewall in the spread of the disease, slowing or preventing further transmission of the disease to others. Unvaccinated individuals are indirectly protected by vaccinated individuals, as the latter are less likely to contract and transmit the disease between infected and susceptible individuals. Hence, a public health policy of herd immunity may be used to reduce spread of an illness and provide a level of protection to a vulnerable, unvaccinated subgroup. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herd_immunity*

Once organizations attain herd immunity (defined as 80%) in their employed staff, the business need becomes neutral. As a manager who has limited contact in patient care areas, and when I do- working in surgery- I am wearing a mask, the job necessity is arguable.

In America, we should not be subjecting employees to mandatory vaccine without allowing for philosophical, moral, or ethical exemptions. Hospitals limit employees to medical exemption (only signed off by a medical doctor) or a religious exemption. I have been denied both of these at the cost of my employment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Arndt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "A".

Vicki (Bailey) Arndt

December 1, 2011

Vicki Bailey,

Re: Request for Religious Exemption from Influenza Vaccination

Aurora Health Care has made the decision to make the influenza vaccination a condition of employment with the organization. We made the decision knowing that this will protect our patients, families and each other. Many of our patients are elderly or severely ill, and due to their medical condition often have suppressed immune systems. In such situations, succumbing to the flu can be serious or deadly. Unvaccinated health care workers are considered a key cause of flu outbreaks in health care settings. Vaccination of health care workers has been linked to a significant reduction in patient mortality.

Your request for religious exemption has been reviewed by our panel and has been denied. The information you have provided is insufficient to establish your eligibility for a religious-based exemption.

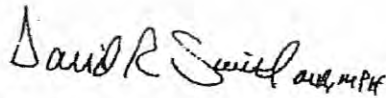
With this decision, the expectation is that you will receive the influenza vaccination by Dec. 31, 2011. Caregiver flu clinics have been scheduled to make this process as easy as possible for you. If there are no additional clinics scheduled in your area, please contact your local Employee Health representative to arrange for a vaccination. If you receive your vaccination from another source, please turn in the required form, completed by the clinician providing the vaccination, to Employee Health. The form is available on the Flu Resource Center on iConnect or from your local Employee Health department.

Please be aware that failure to receive an influenza vaccine by December 31, 2011, will result in voluntary resignation from employment with Aurora Health Care. If you do not intend to receive the flu vaccine, please give proper notice, typically three weeks prior to December 31, 2011, to receive your PTO accrual payout.

Please contact Rhonda Taylor Parris at 414-647-3346 or email rhonda.taylor.parris@aurora.org if you would like to discuss our decision or if you have any questions.



Kathy Leonhardt, MD, MPH
Vice President / Patient Safety Officer
Office of Patient Experience
Aurora Health Care



David R. Smith, MD, MPH
Vice President / Care Management
Office of Patient Experience
Aurora Health Care

June 1, 2011

Acupuncture for Everything! LLC
5603 7th Ave
Kenosha WI, 53140
262-358-0991

To whom it may concern,

This letter is written on behalf of Vicki Bailey, to excuse her from mandatory vaccinations.

Vaccines contain many chemical immune system sensitizers such as formaldehyde, mercury, aluminum compounds, phenol, acetone, antifreeze, monosodium glutamate, and aspartame. These toxins often make the body more susceptible to infection. Given the medical history of Vicki Bailey, she should not be given vaccinations.

Sincerely,
Tina Perri, L.Ac., M.S.O.M., M.Ed., B.S., B.A

Vicki Bailey Pg 4 of 5

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Sally Horton <cowdown55@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, November 08, 2013 1:53 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Vaccine opt out

Thank you so much for sponsoring this bill. I am a nurse who just got a forced flu vaccine last Friday. My employer went to forced vaccines 2 years ago. I was at least able to hold out for a mercury free one. I work in a nursing home where they also vaccinate all the residents. They say we must get the vaccine to protect the residents. When I pointed out that the residents were ALREADY protected by THEIR vaccine, so we shouldn't NEED to be vaccinated as well, I was told that the immune systems of the elderly don't completely react to the vaccine. The problem with that is that I myself am pushing 60 years! Also interesting is that while we are required to sign off that we got the vaccine, the paper we sign says we received information on the pros and cons of the vaccine. I have yet to see my employer provide anything 'con' in writing. and certainly not at the time of vaccination.

I freely admit to being part of the 'tin foil hat' brigade. I believe there is something to Bill Gates' comments on vaccines to reduce the population. I know that the AIDS outbreak in Africa exactly mirrors the area where the polio vaccine was given, and that the polio vaccine I received as a child may have been cultured on contaminated tissue has has been shown to cause cancer.

At best, forced vaccinations are part of a plan to control/reduce the worlds population. At best, they are a violation of our Constitutional right to be secure in our persons. I will actively work against ANY candidate or ANY party that violates the Constitution

I cannot be at the hearing on Wednesday as I work, but if my comments will be at all helpful to you, please feel free to use them and/or my name as being AGAINST forced vaccinations.

Thank you very much
Sally Horton
721 Hyatt St.
Janesville, WI
920-988-7073

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Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Linda Kauffeld <lindakauffeld@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 07, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: RE: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled

Dear Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt,
Thanks so much for challenging this. I feel so bad for my daughter who works in Hospice, currently mandated, "mask or vaccine". So, she'll be wearing "the mask" until May. God Bless you! Below is a testimony I sent to UW Health when I read of them pushing the vaccines on their employees , again!!!
Linda

Nov. 12, 2012

Dear UW Health,
It is with great sadness and concern learning of your possible decision to make your employees make a choice between employment and a mandated flu shot. These are the people who have faithfully served you and tended to the concern, wellbeing and health of their patients.

Last year, I was employed at St Mary's Health Care Center in Madison. As a COTA for 35 years in geriatric care with a totally clean record with extra bonuses for professionalism, I was forced to make a choice of "mask or flu shot". Based on years of concern for the growing problems now surfacing as a result of these vaccinations, with questionable at best "protection" I chose, "the mask". Fortunately for me, my new job started the week before Dec 1st, the "starting date of shot or mask". Although I was very relieved to acquire a new job, I was saddened for the people who succumbed to the shot, with little to no awareness to the potential side effects.

When can we call America "free" when our employers now have the ability to force their employees to inject into their person toxins. Toxins, that when researched are in question to their health benefits and with even some studies indicating that they are not only NOT beneficial to their intended purpose; but even dangerously hazardous with long term neurological damage to the recipient of such vaccine.

I am enclosing just a few articles for your review. There are many more. Please don't force this onto your loyal and faithful servants who tend to the care of your patients. Give them the freedoms that we as Americas have and should continue to have. That being, after our own personal research of the risks as a result of these chemicals verses the possible claimed benefits, that each person choose for themselves the treatment course.

I'm not saying we shouldn't be concerned for the flu. But, like anything, there are other ways to address the spread of the flu. Educate your people as to how to strengthen their immune system, thus not only will you have healthier staff, but you will save money with less sick time.

Please review the enclosed articles and spend some time learning about these vaccines and outcomes. Since there are such discrepancies as to the benefits/hazards PLEASE do not force this onto yourselves and your employees without more research. Like all medical procedures, Americans should be given the choice to learn about the procedure, and then make informed choices and accept the outcomes of their choices.

Dr Mercola has much information to offer on his web site regarding the results of his research and alternate methods to avoid the flu. National Vaccine Information Center is another source of information. I believe Barb Fisher founded this organization as a result of personally experiencing very bad effects in her family from vaccinations. There are others. Truly a very controversial subject; one that SHOULD NOT BE MANDATED!!! Thank you for your consideration and may you proceed with education and extreme caution. I would very much appreciate a response to this letter.

Linda Kauffeld

P.S. Incidentally, I have been employed one year at my current 120 bed skilled nursing rehab facility. There is NO pressure what so ever to get the flu vaccine and last year we had no significant out breaks of the flu. WHY ALL THE HYPE!

PPS Added 11/7/2013. I have now been employed at the same facility as mentioned above. I'm so thankful this facility puts VERY little pressure on it's employees to get vaccinated. I have also gone through two flu seasons at this facility with absolutely NO significant flu outbreaks. I might add, that I have worked in skilled nursing home facilities for 30 years, and the last two years at this facility, the instances of flu were perhaps even less than normal. OR, they just don't get all hyped up about it. People get the flu, rest, drink fluids, eat healthy, AND they get well and their immunity is stronger as a result. I grow so weary of all the hype!!!!

11/8/13

3

My name is Lisa and I would like to share my personal experience because of a mandatory flu vaccine. In the year 2011 my place of employment implemented the mandatory flu vaccine for all of its associates. I, never having a flu shot and no reason to try to get an exemption, went and received my shot. If I did not do it I would lose my job. Who wants that? September 16th 2011 a co-worker and I went together to get our shot. Within the following week I began to feel sore and just not right. I was told soreness was a normal reaction and it would go away. I continued on, going to work, being a wife, Mom etc. This feeling did not go away. Many nights I was crawling on the floor to put my children to bed. I will spare some personal medical details, but by October 1st I was officially an inpatient at the very same facility that made this vaccine mandatory... I went days going from bed to wheel chair. (At this point I could not walk on my own, I was paralyzed from the waist down.) After many tests I was given a diagnosis. Transverse Myelitis. A direct result from the flu vaccine. It has been two years now. I still have numbness, weakness in my legs, back pain and a lot of other issues related to my MANDATORY flu vaccine injury... I blindly followed the policy in order to keep my job. I was an active 35 year old mother of two very active kids. And now, not only do I suffer the pain of TM. My family also suffers. Unless this happens to you or somebody you know, you will never quite understand how devastating this can be.

Lisa Sabel

11/10/13

As we approach the flu season, my employer develops a flu vaccine policy, demanding employees to be vaccinated. Through the years, and as recent as last week, I have treated patients with devastating complications from these vaccines. Therefore, I feel my employer should not be able to force me to receive these vaccines. I have complied to wear a face mask while treating patients, and while on duty.

I have dedicated 24 years to the company, and have been advised by my physician NOT to receive the vaccine. I feel threatened and should not be forced to seek alternative employment.

Please withhold my name

11/8/13

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am a nurse who has been administering the seasonal flu vaccine for several years, though I choose not to receive the vaccine myself. This year maybe the last year for me to work and not have had the vaccine, I see my employer getting closer and closer to mandating flu vaccine for all employees.

I was very disturbed this fall to be giving injections to hospital employees, in tears, saying "I don't want this but I have to do it to keep my job." I heard this many times and saw heartache on their face. These people are told they could be "carriers" and might infect others I would like to see the research on that statement.

I would think, what kind of a country have we become, to force a person to take into their body substances they don't believe in? Substances that are detrimental to their health. The research says the flu vaccine is 56% effective. The enclosed pamphlet that accompanies the vaccine does not indicate the vaccine is fully safe for pregnant or lactating women, these women just say my MD says I have to have the shot.

What kind of a country do we live in when the government is not concerned about individual values, that we are brow beaten, bullied by coworkers into receiving the vaccine.

Please do not use my name publically, I may want to work for this company next year.

(6)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: jscgroff@charter.net
Sent: Saturday, November 09, 2013 9:17 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

Thank you for the email regarding the influenza vaccine exemption bill. I am unable to attend the hearing due to my work schedule but I would like to express my concerns about the possibility of being forced to receive a vaccine that I do not want.

A while back, I visited my physician who came in wearing a mask. She explained that she was being forced to wear the mask because she had refused to be vaccinated for influenza. Since then I have heard that it is mandatory to be vaccinated if someone works in a medical setting. It made me angry that people are being forced to receive a vaccine or lose their job. My concern is that eventually, we will all be forced to do the same.

I work for a school district and each year, we receive numerous emails encouraging us to receive the flu vaccine. Personally, as an adult, I have had the flu three times in 30 years. I am extremely careful about washing my hands, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, exercising, and taking supplements. I feel that my lifestyle has made my immune system strong and thus, have not felt the need to be vaccinated.

The publicity the flu vaccine has received in recent years makes me question the real need for being immunized against the flu. The statistics I have read indicate that the number of people dying from the flu today is the same as it was years ago. Years back, I never heard of people getting a flu shot and now, I hear it constantly. I question who is benefitting, the patients or the pharmaceutical companies? Does it all boil down to money?

Receiving a flu vaccine should be up to the individual, not mandated. The proponents of receiving a flu shot will argue that the flu won't be passed on to others if we all get the vaccine. My thought is that we all need to be proactive and take steps to keep our bodies healthy in order to fight the germs that cause the flu.

My hope is that we, as individuals, will be able to choose the vaccines we want to receive, and not have to choose between a shot or keeping our jobs.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Sue Groff

11/9/13

7

Thanks for working to get this bill pushed forward!

I work in healthcare so there is a strong push/mandate for all to be immunized.

But as the statistics stated in your bill...this vaccine does not have the efficacy of all the other required vaccines for employment.

It frightens me because such a large volume of vaccine is rushed through production...hence huge concern over quality control, but worse, the vaccine is just someone's best guess.

I grew up in the 60's,70's. My father was a general practitioner who had us pictured on the front page of our local newspaper taking the polio vaccine.

But he never wanted us to take the flu vaccine for all of your researched information and his fear of Guillain-Barre virus.

He told us that if we kept ourselves healthy, we would recover from the flu, but Guillain-Barre lasted forever. It always leaves residual damage.

So I have always followed his advice and lived a healthy lifestyle.

I wore a mask last year as it was the alternative choice...but this year there was no choice if it was for personal reasons or concerns for my health.

I had to take it as I need my employment..but I felt totally violated...bullied in to the choice.

Please, Please, continue to work to pass this bill.

YOU MAY USE THE CONTENT OF THIS E-MAIL BUT PLEASE PROTECT MY PRIVACY...I NEED EMPLOYMENT.

Thanks for your time,

Worried, scared, frustrated Wisconsin resident

11/9/13

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Please do not use my name or email addressfor obvious reasons as you noted in your letter.

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

Thank you for taking on this important subject.

I work for Aurora Advanced Healthcare. I worked for Advanced Heath Care who became part of Aurora in 2008. In November of 2011, after I had already worked with Advanced Health Care and then Aurora a combined total of 12 years I was told, along with the approximately 30,000 other employees, that now, part of the 'condition for employment' was to get a yearly flu vaccine. We were told this was to protect the patients.

I was appalled and astounded that I had to do this! Many, many of my co-workers including physicians were astounded and upset too. In my case, I work in an office building, not in contact at all with patients and didn't feel that this should apply to me. Aurora felt that if one level of staff is required to get the shot it would be fair for all too get it. (I am not a health care worker in direct contact with patients partly because I do not want to get the other mandated shots for those who do work in the industry.) Further we were told that if we did not comply we would loose our jobs. We were told if we left or 'chose' not to get the shot that we couldn't file for unemployment because we were 'choosing' to leave employment. I would be forced to choose between my job and my opposition to put unwanted chemicals into my body. My husband was unemployed at the time and choosing not to get the shot meant no income for us.

That is a tough choice. I considered looking for another job but that was a rough time for getting jobs as the economy was in tough times. Jobs, GOOD JOBS were not plentiful. Aurora noted that there were exemption possibilities such as and allergy to egg or any component of the flu shot or for religious reasons. We would have to prove one of these for an exemption. After a visit/discussion with my naturopath I decided to have an egg allergy lab test done. My test results were one point shy of being positive for an egg allergy but the lab noted that they could not rule out anaphylaxis so I did eventually get an exemption. Whew. I was very relieved. But I saw the anguish in my co-workers who did not want the shot and no way out. At that time many heard the story of one person in our Forest Home site who ended up with paralysis from getting the vaccine. That was scary. Many were looking for a way out-fast! I know some consulted attorneys.

In 2012 I received a letter from Aurora noting that I was still exempt from getting the vaccine due to my previous lab results so no vaccine in 2012, and the letter further stated that I would be exempt for the term of my employment with Aurora Health Care. This made me happy. But in July 2013 I receive another letter telling me that I would be exempt this year but there is now a new formula for the vaccine that does not include egg. They noted that I should discuss getting this vaccine with my physician. They further noted that because my exemption was due to an egg allergy and there is now an egg-free vaccine I will need to reapply for an exemption in 2014. I don't like this threat hanging over me again. I now have to work with this anxiety until I find out what exemptions I might qualify for or

not....and the uncertainty of future income. It makes planning for anything in the future impossible.

It is now vaccine time again and I was speaking with a few of my co-workers just the other day about their hesitation in getting the vaccine and how they are putting it off as long as possible. Someone who received the vaccine passed out shortly after returning to their workstation. An ambulance had to be called. They were noting that if they had the choice they would not get the vaccine but lamented 'they have no choice'. This is sad to see and hear.

I do hope that something can be done about companies mandating what we put into our bodies. If I were an employer I would want to be able to run my company as I see fit...but I believe this goes beyond running the company. This is running my life and invasive of my privacy and I find this too controlling for an employer over my body. This is also very self serving for a large healthcare company. I am finding it difficult to continue working for a company who only has the bottom line in mind while claiming to be helping their employees 'live well'. I appreciate their offer for a free vaccine but the choice should be mine. Patients, as well as my co-workers, can get the flu from any source and not just from entering a healthcare facility.

Thank you for any efforts to take away my employer's rights to control my body.

11/9/13

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for the AB 247. I along with many other hospital employees are so grateful that someone cares about our concerns regarding mandated flu shots as a condition of employment. We are all hoping and praying that this bill is able to be passed. I have been an RN for almost 25 years. I work in a large central WI hospital which began mandating the influenza vaccine last year. We were able to wear masks last year if we refused the vaccine. I wore my mask faithfully along with my other coworkers who refused the flu vaccine. (Just an FYI-the mask wears were the ones who did NOT get sick). This year they changed their policy. We were told either get the flu shot or you would not receive a raise. Next year the policy gets even tougher-no shot -no job.

I am all for protecting the patients but this is not the way to do it. It is not right to force people into mandated medical treatment and threaten them with their jobs/professions if they don't comply. Nobody should be forced to receive a vaccine that contains many chemicals such as formaldehyde, Tritonx-100, MSG ,polysorbate 80, neomycin, polymyxin to name a few. Any medical treatment exposes the recipient to varying degrees of risk. The influenza vaccine has the potential to cause disability or death. If vaccines were universally beneficial and harmless, mandated hospital policies would NOT be necessary for enforcement. It is unfair, irresponsible and unethical for employers to force healthcare workers to choose between their health/ beliefs and their livelihood/professions. Please consider this when deciding to pass this bill. I know MANY people would be so grateful if this bill is able to be passed. Let Wisconsin do the RIGHT thing. Thank you very much. (Name withheld)

11/9/13

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Hi Jeremy,

Thank you for taking up this effort. I can't make it to Madison for the hearing and I would like my name withheld for obvious reasons. I would just like to tell my brief story and have you take a look at a powerful article by Dr. Peter Doshi (link below). Hopefully you can use the information in the article at your hearing.

I work in Healthcare and as such am subject to the mandated flu shot. I have been able to "opt out" the last few years, but the policy is tightening and I fear it will eventually transition into a vaccinate or terminate policy.

This year we had the option to either get the shot or opt out by getting a declination form signed by a doctor or religious leader. Even if you are fortunate enough to get the form signed, you still have to wear a mask for the duration of the CDC declared Flu epidemic time period. I was able to get the declination form signed by my priest. Others were not so fortunate. They couldn't get the form signed by a doctor or religious leader and therefore were forced to get the vaccination before they could report to work. And these are people that were "absolutely" opposed to the getting the shot.

I am astonished at the lack of outrage to this absolute assault on our personal liberties. The "drones" have no problem standing in line to take something into their bodies that they really know nothing about. They just trust that the pharmaceutical money brokers and the government have their best interest at heart. It's really absurd how naïve people are. Even if there were no ill effects from the shot, which I don't believe, you still have a God given, inalienable right in this country to "decline" taking something into your body that you don't want. I think this is still America, but I'm starting to wonder lately what happened to my country.

Below is a link to the most comprehensive, informative, and compelling article that I have read regarding why NOT to get the flu shot. Could you please review the article and include it in your hearing. I think it's very powerful information. I've also included another link to an article by Dr. Mercola. It's another very compelling article.

Dr. Doshi

<http://www.newsmxhealth.com/Headline/influenza-virus-flu-vaccine-Peter-Doshi-Ph-D-/2013/05/16/id/504942>

Dr. Mercola

[http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/09/18/flu-shot-increases-flu-illness.aspx'](http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/09/18/flu-shot-increases-flu-illness.aspx)

I greatly appreciate your efforts in this regard Jeremy, as do others in my circle who share the same passion for protecting liberty.

Sincerely,

XXX

11/10/13

Representative Thiesfeldt,

I have recently been informed of your effort to assist healthcare workers mandated to receive the influenza vaccine as a condition of their employment, and I applaud you for your efforts.

I am a registered nurse and endured countering this challenge within the past few years. My husband suffered from Guillan Barre Syndrome, and his neurologist advised me that my receiving the flu shot could potentially put his health at risk. When I presented this to my employer, my husband's neurologist, who works for another health care system, received a great deal of interrogation from an administrative physician within the health care system which employs me. For this reason I obtained written exemption requests from both my physician and this neurologist. I was later informed by my employer's physician that my husband's neurologist approved me to receive the vaccination. I asked for documentation from him to support the obvious disparity between the neurologist's recommendations to myself and him. He was not able to supply this, and later granted me a permanent exemption for the duration of my employment. In the meantime a great deal of unnecessary turmoil was created, including frustration by my husband's neurologist due to the ongoing questioning and interference in my husband's medical situation. In addition, I felt very threatened and mistrusted by my employer, and feared for the loss of my job.

My sincere hope is that your efforts will be successful in order to preserve health care employees their choice (be they be based upon medical, religious, or whatever personal reasons) to make their own choice whether they want to receive the influenza vaccination.

I ask that you please withhold my name/contact info if my story is to be utilized.

Thank you in advance!

11/10/13

12

To Whom it may concern,

I am employed at a health care facility in Wisconsin. This will be the third year that it is mandatory for all employees and volunteers to have a flu shot or be taken off the schedule. I am strongly against having this unknown substance put into my body with no choice.

We can fill out a Religious Exemption Form, and wear a mask during our work day but I know of many people who were turned down, me being one of them. The forms are ridiculous. They ask prior vaccinations and dates, does it really matter that our parents immunized us. Were adults now and should have choices of what is injected into us. I don't have a Religious leader. I am a Christian who believes in God and it's a personal relationship for me. I believe in the 10 commandments, and Thou Shall Not Kill is one of them. The flu vaccine and other vaccines have killed and I don't care if its once or 500 times. It should be our choice if we want to take that chance.

I was forced to receive the vaccination last year, or lose my job. This was mentally so hard for me. I had to actually block the whole thing out because it bothers me so much. I felt like I was raped. Something was put into my body that I was totally against and I can't take it back out and have no idea of what harm it has caused to me.

I think it is unconstitutional to force this on people. I don't even have patient contact. What happened to our rights? For every article for the vaccines, there is also an article against them. Shouldn't we be able to research both sides and make our own decision? I have to wonder also, Is this really about money and just being covered up by "its for yours and others health?"

Sincerely,

Someone who cares.

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Father Martin <padremartin99@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 4:31 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu shot hearing

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I would like simply to let you know that I am opposed to the idea of a mandatory flu shot. I am a Catholic priest working in Marshfield and the local hospital (Ministry St. Joseph) had stated that all of us working as chaplains would have to get the flu shot or no longer be able to assist our patients. I filled out the religious exemption form because I believe that such a demand is a breach of conscience. I got the flu shot once (1999) and it made me sick for a week. I rarely get sick - I have not had a sick day in at least 15 years. So, for me the flu shot is superfluous. Moreover, I was not consulted about this requirement beforehand, so I believe it is an unnecessary imposition. I am stubborn and do not like being told what to do, especially when I do not feel like I'm a dangerous germ-carrying person whose very presence endangers lives. Thankfully the hospital allowed me to be dispensed of the flu shot for this year. My suspicion is that unless a law is passed protecting us from such assaults on our conscience, I'll have to go through this again next year. The one thing I am certain of is that I will not be getting the flu shot. For the record, I respect those who do get the flu shot and think it's their right. Conversely, I think I have a right to refuse the flu shot.

Okay, I hope this helps you during the hearing this Wednesday. I will be praying that God impart wisdom to our legislators so that we can live free in this great country.

Thank you for your time and efforts. May God reward you!

In Christ,
Father Samuel Martin

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: mary grobelny <maryp-g@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 4:36 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: RE: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled
Attachments: flu letter.doc

I am attaching the letter that I sent to my employer declining the flu shot. It was denied stating that "it is not from a recognized religion". (I attached it to *their* religious exemption).

I emphasize strongly that I am vehemently opposed to flu vaccines and that my employer (Mercy Health System) is bullying me into receiving one.

It is imperative that we move swiftly on this this bill. All Mercy employees will be on unpaid administrative leave until they receive the shot. This will take place FRIDAY, NOV. 15!!!

Please help me in my cause to keep myself healthy and free of unsubstantiated threats.

Thank you for all you do.

In health,
Mary

To whom it may concern;

I am writing you today to explain and defend why I am declining to receive the 2013 flu vaccine. It is based on my personal convictions that are medically, legally, religiously, and philosophically supported.

Medical research has indicated that the flu is grossly exaggerated.^{1,2} Each year the World Health Organization meets to decide which flu strains should be contained. However, there are over 200 flu viruses and the flu "is constantly evolving and changing"³ "There's no predictable pattern to seasonal viruses to change and no internal clock or pattern that you can use to predict when the next pandemic virus will emerge"⁴ According to CDC data, influenza like illness (ILI) is caused by an influenza virus only about 14% of the time: stated differently, a virus other than the influenza virus causes illness 86% of the time⁵. The vaccine is not guaranteed you will be flu-free. Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of t the CDC stated, "In fact it's about 62% effective"⁶ Further data supports that there are no fewer days missed from work for those individuals who received the flu shot. In a review of 25 reports involving 60,000 adults the conclusion was "Vaccination of healthy adults only reduced risk of influenza by 6% and only reduced the number of missed work days by less than one day (0.16 days). Universally immunization of adults was not supported by the results of this review"⁷ Personally, I can not prescribe to a philosophy where their "best guess" is their means of data.

There are also many additional chemicals found in the flu shot. These include: formaldehyde, aluminum salts, gentamicin and polymyxin B, mercury (thimerosal) in high dose shot, gelatin and sulfa drugs.⁷ I am allergic to sulfa drugs. I do not want to put any allergen into my body knowing I will have an adverse reaction. More importantly, many of these ingredients are known detergents and known carcinogens. I may also have the following reaction or side effect to the vaccination: cough, diarrhea, fever, headache, irritability, muscle aches,

redness of the eyes sneezing sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, or vomiting.⁸ In addition, there is a risk of anaphylaxis, Guillain Barre Syndrome, myalgia, headache, and malaise.⁹ The influenza vaccine is also linked to narcolepsy ¹⁰ as well as acute disseminated encephalomyelitis ¹¹

I truly believe that the vaccination is an evasive medical procedure based on the above information. I believe I am supported by the right to refuse this due the direct violation of the Nuremburg Code which states I "should be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other form of constraint or coercion". Article 4 ""to avoid all unnecessary physical and mental suffering and injury" Article 6 The degree of risk to be taken should never exceed that determined by the humanitarian importance of the problem solved by the experiment. Article 9 During the course of the experiment, the human subject should be at liberty to bring the experiment to an end, if he has reached the physical and mental state, where continuation of the experiment seemed to him to be impossible.¹²

I also feel mandating vaccinations is against my religious beliefs as protected under Amendment 1 of the US Constitution. I am a Christian and believe that I should respect my body. God gave me a perfect body, mind, and soul of which I choose to respect. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. 2 Leviticus 11:44-45. Ephesians 5:27 and Romans 12:1 Injecting my body with well-known carcinogens is deeply against my religious beliefs.

I take my health very seriously. I exercise daily. I sleep 8 hrs a night. I eat a clean diet high in alkalinity and loaded in nutrients to boost my immune system. I manage my stress because I meditate, pray, and practice yoga. I eat organic as often as I can and avoid all processed, genetically modified, and fast food options. I drink lots of water. I take supplements. I wash my hands. During the winter months, I increase my dosage of Vitamin C and Vitamin D. These practices alone are known to combat the seasonal flu. ^{13,14}

These daily practices allow me to strengthen my immune system. I truly believe that injecting a combination of chemicals into my bloodstream will weaken my natural immunity. This is a strong personal and philosophical conviction that I possess based on fact and research.. Being forced into having an injection I am philosophically opposed to deeply disturbs me and is in great contradiction to my philosophical and spiritual practices. Wisconsin has a philosophical/personal belief exemption, Statute 252.04, (15), 16 which I am exercising my right to claim.

I sincerely hope you respect my concerns and wishes.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Grobelny

11/10/13

(15)

To the committee regarding AB 247

I work at Marshfield Clinic, and have been employed for 14 years and have been a dependable and great employee and have never had the flu. Because of the risk of repercussions by my writing this statement I would like to remain anonymous.

This year I will not be allowed to continue my employment if I don't not have a flu vaccination. I am sure that there is some sort of monetary benefit to the Clinic in order for them to take away my rights, which should also be illegal.

What I would like to share with this committee is that I have never felt so bullied. I cannot believe that any employer could force an employee to have a medical procedure against their will. It starts with a flu shot, once this allowed then employers will take more and more INDIVIDUAL rights away. Next maybe I should have a CTscan, Xray, DNA testing prior to signing up for employer sponsored health plans, just in case I have some underlying disease and if I do then I will be denied insurance or will be made to pay a much higher premium. **Where will this stop?** I feel as though we have gone back to Nazi Germany and communism is alive and thriving at Marshfield Clinic. I signed no contract indicating that I would have any medical procedure that my employer feels is necessary for me to keep my job.

There is also a lack of supporting evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents influenza transmission. I believe that these vaccinations are providing a false sense of security and therefore putting patients at risk.

An even greater risk exists for those that receive the vaccination. The CDC lists the following as being found in the influenza vaccination: Neomycin, Polymyxin B, formaldehyde or formalin, thimerosal, embryonated *chicken* eggs, egg albumin, gelatin, Gentamycin, Polyoxyethylene 9-10 Nonyl Phenol (Triton N-101, Octoxynol 9), chick kidney cells and Taurodeoxycholate.

Many of these are known carcinogens and detergents that have unknown effects on the human body. Chronic over exposure to antibiotics has also proven to be detrimental to overall health.

Some of the potential side effects from the vaccination include anaphylaxis, allergic asthma, redness and discomfort at the injection site, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, vasculitis, body aches, parenthesis, neuropathy, seizure, facial palsy, facial paresis, Stevens-Johnson

Syndrome, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, cough, chills, fever, encephalitis and meningitis and death.

Thimerosal has been shown to potentially increase the risk of Alzheimer's Disease, brain damage and nervous system injury. As I understand it the drug companies and employers cannot be held liable for any reaction an individual may have from any vaccine, which I understand, but only IF I CHOOSE to have this injection.

Dr. Belongia states that there are 2 types of influenza that circulate in humans: A and B Within A, there are 2 subtypes that circulate in humans: H3N2 and There are 2 different B lineage viruses (Yamagata and Victoria). The quadrivalent vaccine covers both A subtypes and both B lineages. In any given season, some or all of these viruses may be present. Last season nearly all of the A viruses in Marshfield were H3N2, and both B lineage viruses were circulating. The same was true for the US and Wisconsin. The effectiveness of the flu vaccine was 44% against A and 62% against B last year

I WILL BE TERMINATED FOR 44% and 62% effectiveness????? SERIOUSLY???? Dr. Belogia is the Director, Epidemiology Research Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation Office: 715-389-3783

I have NO CHOICE if I want to keep my job, I must have this injection or face termination. This is BULLYING and HARRASSMENT.

Workplace bullying occurs when an employee experiences a persistent pattern of mistreatment from others in the workplace that causes harm. Workplace bullying can include such tactics as verbal, nonverbal, psychological, physical abuse and humiliation. This type of aggression is particularly difficult because, unlike the typical forms of school bullying, workplace bullies often operate within the established rule and policies of their organization and their society. Bullying in the workplace is in the majority of cases reported as having been perpetrated by someone in authority over the employees. Negative effects are not limited to the employee and will certainly lead to a decline in employee morale and a change in company culture. History has shown that bullying has led to

suicides along with mental illness, alcoholism, drug abuse depression, eating disorders and many other negative health issues. I know that I have been losing sleep and find it hard to concentrate, as do others. I have also seen people give in because they have no choice if they wish to feed their family. It is my body and life and to have my employer tell me that unless I have a medical procedure, I will be terminated. This is wrong on so many different levels. This is harassment and is a perfect example of bullying and should be against the law. What happened to my rights? I would never begin to question anyone as to why they choose to have a vaccination or procedure, as this type of decision is a personal decision and none of my business. Who am I to judge any persons choices. It is **not** my place **nor** is it my employers' place to judge me in this manner.

If there is one thing that I learned while growing up it is that I should stand up for what I believed in, and above all stand up for those people that cannot stand up for themselves. What I find sad, is that I now feel like I can no longer stand up for myself, I am no longer strong enough to fight for my rights. I need to work and I want to work. But my rights have been taken away and that is an awful feeling to know that I no longer have control over my medical care and life.

As a patient I have rights to evaluate the medical care/choices of treatments and decide what is best for me and what treatments I am comfortable with. (4) But as an employee I don't have these choices? Next will the Marshfield Clinic require that all patients show proof of vaccination prior to coming to this facility?

I have included the new Marshfield Clinic policy written just this year (1), Additional information from the EEOC (3) (which indicates that my employer should not be able to ask about me what religion I belong too.) **(note on the included Marshfield Clinic religious exemption form also included, page 2 the signature section, (5) by signing this I am giving the Marshfield Clinic the rights to contact anyone they want, regarding my personal spiritual/religious beliefs.) This according to the EEOC is illegal and should be stopped immediately.**

I guess I hope that this committee sees how wrong this is and puts a stop to any employer being allowed to bully an employee into having a medical procedure against their will. Management will begin terminations beginning Dec 9th. (See page 7 of the Marshfield Clinic

Policy (1) for the enforcement. We employees will be questioned in a "sincerity interview" SERIOUSLY ??? Does someone from this committee want to join me for mine? Apparently, the employees are grilled by Panty Haney (attorney), Bruce Cuhna, David Keefe (HR director) and another individual. Seriously?? My god this is so very wrong. When I asked for numbers I was told that NO individual's Religious Exemption has been approved???

How would you as representative react if you were given this ultimatum? You would feel bullied.

I ASK THAT YOU PLEASE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THIS BILL AND IF POSSIBLE SPEED THE PROCESS UP BEFORE ALLOT OF GOOD EMPLOYEES HAVE TO MAKE THIS VERY UNFAIR CHOICE.

I apologize for the length of this statement, but it is very difficult to explain how defeated and ANGRY, I and many others feel regarding this issue.

If you have additional questions for me Representative Theisfeldt has my information if any of you have additional questions.

Thank you for your time. Again... If anyone wishes to join me for my "sincerity Interview" Please let Representative Thiesfeldt know and I will give you the date and time.

Sincerely

J

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: susan bradford <sbradford@plbb.us>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 7:30 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Shot

I highly resent being told by my employer that I must have the flu shot in order to retain my employment. I should be able to determine what chemicals I want to put in my body. No one knows what strand of flu will come around and it is a waste of money, and I am not interested in lining the pharmacy companies pocket. Everyone in my family who has gotten the flu shot has become seriously ill after getting it. This is just wrong on so many levels and opens the door to God only knows what else.

Susan Bradford
302 Oak Ridge Drive
Darien, WI 53114
262-882-0055

Timothy James, Registered Physical Therapist, 25 years experience
November 11, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to formally defend my decision to decline the influenza vaccination, and to encourage those of sound mind in a position to regulate such practices as mandating flu vaccines or the wearing of face masks as a punitive measure for refusing same to make such activities illegal. Such policies create oppressive workplace environments. Disturbingly, there is virtual unanimity among healthcare workers about the oppressive nature of their work environment. Many of my peers who didn't want the flu vaccine were afraid to request an exemption for fear of being singled out and fired just for asking. Ironically, there is apparently little room in the medical work world for employees to have and express professional opinions about healthcare issues. This makes for unhappy employees, and that surely compromises the quality of care given to patients.

When healthcare professionals are dictated healthcare policy rather than consulted for their professional opinions about it, there is something seriously wrong with the healthcare industry. The decision to have one's body injected with foreign substances the efficacy of which has not been scientifically demonstrated, while the potential danger of which has been so documented, should be a matter of freedom of choice for those being targeted with flu vaccine mandates. No one has more right to the sanctity of their own body than the individual themselves, and any laws or mandates which deny that reality are simply wrong and need to be expunged. Individuals should not be forcefully subjected at risk of their livelihood and even their life to put themselves in the path of danger by submitting to mandatory flu vaccines by employers or governments acting regardless of the evidence for or against the effectiveness of such vaccines.

Yet that evidence is pretty clear. A study (1) out of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota revealed that, at best, the flu shot has a pathetic 1.5 percent effectiveness rate -- for every 100 people vaccinated with a flu shot, only 1.5 of them will avoid getting the flu. At worst, the flu shot is entirely useless, as the same study showed that about 97 percent of people who do not get a flu shot also do not get the flu. Given a standard margin of error, this study demonstrates no beneficial effect of the flu vaccine at all to those to whom it is administered. As such, there is no medical justification for mandating such vaccines.

My place of employment has recently instigated a mandatory flu vaccine policy complicit with a discriminatory and punitive mandate to wear a mask at all times for refusal of same, or to face termination for non-compliance with either. As a result I must endure the discriminatory wearing of a face mask in my contacts with patients at all times, a mask which interferes with my breathing and my interactions and communications with those patients, while providing no protection from the flu to either them or myself. I have made this decision to refuse the vaccine based on strong moral and ethical convictions that are supported by my religious beliefs, medical research and legal precedent.

Medical research indicates that the efficacy of the influenza vaccination is grossly exaggerated (1). The British Medical Journal has questioned the validity of studies claiming efficacy and stated that "evidence from systemic reviews shows that inactivated vaccines have little or no effect on the effects measured." (2) Another journal has proven influenza vaccinations have not changed the amount of doctor visits or hospitalizations in children (3,4,5), and another shows that vaccinations have not impacted the mortality rate of the elderly population. (6,7) There is also a lack of supporting evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents influenza transmission. (8)

I believe that these vaccinations are providing a false sense of security and therefore putting our patients at risk. An even greater risk exists for those that receive the vaccination. The CDC lists the following as being found in the influenza vaccination: Neomycin, Polymyxin B, formaldehyde or formalin, thimerosal, embryonated chicken eggs, egg albumin, gelatin, Gentamycin, Polyoxyethylene 9-10 Nonyl Phenol (Triton N-101, Octoxynol 9), chick kidney cells and Taurodeoxycholate. (9) Many of these are known carcinogens and detergents that have unknown effects on the human body. Chronic over exposure to antibiotics has also proven to be detrimental to overall health. (10)

Thimerosal has been shown to potentially increase the risk of Alzheimer's Disease, brain damage and nervous system injury. (12,13,14) This is especially alarming to me as my father passed away as a result of Alzheimer's Disease. Package inserts also state that the vaccination/mist "has not been evaluated for carcinogenic or mutagenic potential or its potential to impair fertility." This clearly states then that very little is known about the long-term health effects of receiving this vaccination. There is also no guarantee of protection from influenza or potential temporary or permanent injury or even death as a result of receiving this vaccination.

Some of the potential side effects from the vaccination include anaphylaxis, allergic asthma, redness and discomfort at the injection site, the flu itself, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, vasculitis, body aches, paresthesia, neuropathy, seizure, facial palsy, facial paresis, Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, cough, chills, fever, encephalitis and meningitis, and even death. Furthermore the widespread use of vaccines may play a role in the development of pandemic influenza strains. (11, 18, 19, 25)

Flu rates have been demonstrated to increase by 20% among healthcare facilities mandating flu vaccinations (22). In addition, mandating flu vaccinations can open facilities to retaliatory legal actions for demonstrable injury (21, 22, 25) Lawsuits are already in place challenging not only the mandate of receiving a flu shot but also of forced wearing of masks by those who refuse the vaccine. The mask provision prevents adequate communication between employees and patients, and interferes with workers' rights to "pursue their profession" as part of the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution. In addition, making only some health care employees wear masks violates employees' equal protection rights. (24)

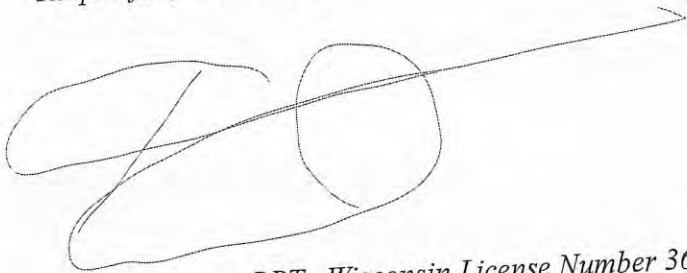
I believe that vaccination is an invasive medical procedure and based on the above, is an experimental procedure. While I support the desire of companies to maintain safety for both patients and staff, I cannot support the use of mandatory vaccinations or forced wearing of masks for refusal of same to achieve this goal. The mandatory administration of this is in direct violation of the Nuremberg Code which states in article 1 that consent should be voluntary and allow for "free power of choice without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion." Article 6 states, "the degree of risk to be taken should never exceed that determined by the humanitarian importance of the problem to be solved by the experiment." And article 9, "During the course of the experiment the human subject should be at liberty to bring the experiment to an end if he has reached the physical or mental state where continuation of the experiment seems to him to be impossible." (15)

As a Christian I believe I am to treat my body with respect as it is a gift from God (see 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 20, The Holy Bible, any version). I believe that destroying life and knowingly injecting myself with toxins is a contradiction to my beliefs and unacceptable. Health is of great importance to me and something that I do not take lightly. I am well informed on health care issues and effective preventive interventions available to deflect and delay illness and injury. I, in company with any reasonable person, am not comfortable with being forced to subject to unproven medical procedures and punitive measures against me for refusing them in light of my better knowledge and my own self preservation interests.

The motivation for mandating flu vaccines is primarily financial. The biggest problem with healthcare is wrongful government intrusion into it. CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) will be deducting 2% of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to hospitals whose employee flu vaccination rates is less than 90%. This means that the scientific merits (or lack thereof) of flu vaccine policy are irrelevant to hospital administrators. By making this a financial issue, those orchestrating the flu vaccine agenda have managed to keep the medical science off the table, a necessity for pushing flu vaccines given the credible information revealing that flu vaccines don't work and can and do cause permanent disability and death, as confirmed by Cochrane Collaboration reviews (26) and the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (27) respectively.

Making these policies illegal is a chance for the government to take a step in the proper direction and one that is consistent with the Constitution of this nation. I urge you to take action in the best interests of healthcare workers and the patients they care for by making mandatory flu vaccines or retaliatory mask wearing for their refusal on valid grounds illegal in this state.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy James, RPT Wisconsin License Number 3615-024 (See references below.)

- 1 <http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099%2811%2970295-X/abstract> and, Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2006;1.
- 2 BMJ 2006;333:
- 3 Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2008 Oct;162(10):943-51
- 4 Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2008;2.
- 5 Arch Dis Child. 2004 Aug;89(8):734-5.
- 6 Lancet Infect Dis. 2007 Oct;7(10):658-66
- 7 Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2008 Sep 1;178(5):527-33. Epub 2008 Jun 12.
- 8 Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2010 Feb 17;(2):CD005187
- 9 <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/excipient-table-2.pdf>
- 10 <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2003/06/18/antibiotics-bacteria.aspx>

- 11 Package inserts for FluMist and Fluarix
- 12 Toxicological & Environmental Chemistry. 2009;91(4):735-49.
- 13 Cell Biol Toxicol. 2010 Apr;26(2):143-52. Epub 2009 Apr 9.
- 14 http://drtenpenny.com/should_flu.aspx
- 15 <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/archive/nurcode.html>
- 16 <http://www.westonaprice.org/>
- 17 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2870528/>
- 18 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23969217>
- 19 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acoUUF5Nss&feature=share>
- 20 <http://therefusers.com/refusers-newsroom/osha-argues-against-mandatory-flu-shots-for-hospital-employees/#.UkS1in9oXHs>
- 21 <http://www.kentlaw.iit.edu/news/2012/settlement-flu-vaccine-lawsuit>
- 22 <http://www.wltx.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=103024>
“A few years of concerted efforts to push flu shots only increased the rate among hospital employees from about 60 percent to about 80 percent, said Dr. Rick Foster, vice president of the South Carolina Hospital Association.”
- 23 <http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/safetysecurity/articles/Pages/Wisconsin-Ban-Mandatory-Flu-Shots.aspx>
- 24 <http://www.amednews.com/article/20130114/government/130119979/6/>
- 25 <http://healthimpactnews.com/2013/flu-shot-causes-polio-like-guillain-barre-syndrome-are-rates-higher-than-the-government-admits/>
- 26 <http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation/statisticsreports.html#Stats>
- 27 <http://www.cochrane.org/news/blog/eminence-vs-evidence> Jefferson’s team examined four large cluster randomised trials and one cohort trial of nearly 20,000 healthcare workers. According to their findings (3), the ‘flu vaccine showed “no effect on specific outcomes: laboratory-proven influenza, pneumonia, or deaths from pneumonia”.

November 10, 2013

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt:

Thank you for introducing **AB 247**. I am submitting this testimony anonymously for the upcoming public hearing. As a physician, I was somewhat surprised to see this bill introduced, but equally delighted and I enthusiastically give **testimony in FAVOR** of it. I encourage all legislators, regardless of party affiliation, to **SUPPORT** this bill.

My story is personal. A couple of years ago, a winter day after being on call, I became acutely ill with fever, some chills, fatigue, muscle aches. Sounds like the flu? Right? I never had the flu, never had a flu shot, and didn't want to be forced to get a flu shot in order to go to work. It was my understanding that my employer's policy would have required the flu vaccine for me to return to work if I went to the ER to get treatment. I loved my work and my patients and would gladly wear a mask or use sick time if needed but I didn't want the vaccine. **Vaccines aren't effective or without risks for everyone and I didn't want to get into any disputes with my employer over a personal health decision in order to work.**

Being "under the weather" I just wanted to sleep. I was feeling pretty ill, but I was in general good health. I thought of going in to the ER but a holiday weekend call responsibility was approaching and I thought that I just needed to rest up on my two off days and I really didn't want a flu vaccine. I thought again about going in because I had never felt this bad, and I remember thinking, "I'll get better and I really don't want to get a flu shot."

So, I stayed home, took fluids, acetaminophen (tylenol), slept and on the weekend tried to get a replacement for work but no luck. As one knows, unless one is dead or "half-dead" doctors don't call in sick when on call, so I went to the hospital to work that Sunday morning planning to go to urgent care later. A colleague saw me and arranged for my patient care responsibilities and took me to urgent care. I was immediately referred to the emergency room and on admission to the ER, only < 72 hours after the start of my symptoms, I was already stroking with one-sided numbness and weakness. [It turns out that I was "half-dead," figuratively speaking, of course, as one is either alive or dead.]

I was previously healthy and very diligent about hand washing and infection control procedures in my practice. So, I will never forget my surprise hearing, "Dr _____, you have Staph in your blood and multiple strokes and a large vegetation on your heart valve"... I was too sick to show emotion.

It was Staph sepsis and the bacterial growths on my heart valve which broke off and went to my brain causing the strokes; and not the flu, that almost killed me. Obviously, I made it out of the hospital alive.

It is somewhat ironic, that as sick as I was, I was never was tested for, treated for, or vaccinated against the flu. Even now, as a physician-patient the doctors ask me but do not pressure me to get the flu vaccine. I have not told my doctors the above part of my story. Perhaps, I should have, but it is rather embarrassing as a physician to get sick in the first place, miss the diagnosis, and then not to have gone to the ER sooner. Three strikes,...and I am out of the work I loved; although grateful and glád that I am still alive, even with deficits.

It was, however, the fear of being forced by my employer to have to get a flu shot in order to keep working, (which I clearly wanted to do, and no longer can), that really was the impediment for my seeking earlier care. Without that fear of having to choose between my employment and my personal health preferences to decline a vaccine for a possible illness, earlier diagnosis and treatment of an actual, acute, infective disease with antibiotics may have prevented the septic, embolic strokes which have now left me permanently unable to work.

I thank you and all the legislators for this opportunity to offer testimony and for your and their service to the people of Wisconsin. I strongly encourage all legislators to **vote in favor of AB 247**. Thank you again.

Anonymous.

NB Wisconsin is short one physician when there are already shortages, not to mention the extra taxes I would have paid. I am middle-aged.

11/10/13

19

Dear Jeremy,

My name is ???? and I am a registered nurse in Weston, Wisconsin. I have been employed with the same company for five years. At first, we as health professionals were offered the choice as to whether or not we wanted the flu vaccination. If we declined, it was my employer's policy that we had to wear face masks during the entire flu season. Two years ago, the company I am employed with made it mandatory that all employees have a flu vaccine or they would be terminated, no questions asked.

Please keep in mind that a patient has the right to refuse any vaccine at any time and are not required by anyone to wear a face mask if declined. We cannot under the law, force a patient to receive any vaccine of any kind. It is against their "rights". Why is it then, that a company can mandate that their employees be forced to have something injected into them and do not get a choice. You either receive it or you are fired?!

My company tries to tell us that it is for our protection and for the resident's protection. I find it absurd that patients can refuse this vaccine if it is truly a matter of protecting the masses!

This is a violation of my constitutional rights and I am tired of having NO rights because I chose a profession in Healthcare! Please tell the CDC to give us the proof that these vaccinations are as effective as they say because I am not convinced. There are many countries around us that don't mandate this vaccine because the studies do not show the effectiveness the CDC seems to be able to report.

I am really tired of politicians in this country only care about laws that will benefit them or big business or drug companies. Let's put an end to this now!

Thank you for representing us and helping our voices to be heard. It is a breath of fresh air to actually have a representative who cares about US!

Thank you!

Sincerely,

XXXXX, RN

P.S. please do not share my name if you choose to share this testimony. I am sure that many companies including mine, would "find" some other reason to let us go if they knew we were protesting their policies.

P.S.S. I would never recommend that anyone enter the healthcare field. In this field, the only person who has rights is the patient. Healthcare workers do not have rights. We get kicked, punched, bitten and pushed every day and we are not allowed to defend ourselves in any way nor show any facial expression that any patient may find demeaning or offensive. Now we are forced to inject chemicals into our bodies that we do not want. I don't know of any other country that requires this!!

11/11/13

20

Representative Erik Severson:

(Please do not use my name at this time.)

Currently I am an ED RN working in the mid Wisconsin area for a large facility. My co-workers and I are being forced in to mandatory influenza vaccination for our facility. A majority of the RN's I work with have caved with the pressure of our employer and received the vaccine even though they do not agree with mandatory vaccine policy. The other factor that has kept them from receiving the vaccine in the past is the vaccine is highly ineffective and has dangerous components and side effects.

The facility has many ancillary employees that are also attempting to refuse the vaccine but most have caved due to our employers pressure. We are told as of this next year the facility as a whole (meaning Ministry/Ascension facilities) will not hire individuals who will not receive the influenza vaccine. The facility promotes the vaccine as an effective means of preventing the flu even though studies have proven that handwashing is more effective than the vaccine.

I am continuing to refuse being vaccinated for the influenza. I am a hardworking employee and am healthy, only calling in sick one time in almost 3 years. I have an allergy to the vaccine from an administration in the distant past and refuse to allow my body to be assaulted in the same manner again. My signed declination brought in for the "review board" was filled out by my primary MD by the deadline. The "review board" has decided my declination and medical excuse was not valid and an appeal was required. I made an appeal and have not heard from them as of yet.

I not only have medical reasons for declining the vaccine. I also stand along with those claiming a religious exemption as I believe my body is my temple and only I have the right to say what is introduced into it. This hospital is a religious facility and is denying those with religious reasons an exemption.

If those of us who decline the vaccine continue to do so, we have been notified that we will not receive the general wage increase until we do comply. In the event we decide to leave the facility we will not be allowed back until we comply. Are rights to our health and welfare are being violated with the threats of our lively hood and means of supporting our family are being threatened in order to gain compliance. Investigating this matter has lead me to information that this all ends back at the Obama Care ACA where hospitals are required a 90% compliance rate in order to receive maximum reimbursement from Medicare/Medicaid.

My right and those of my fellow employees are being violated with the threat of no general wage increase and the fear of job loss. The constitutional rights of many are being violated with these tactics and I will not comply but I live in fear of losing my income and profession.

Currently I work for Ministry St. Clare Hospital which is affiliated with Ascencion Health and is nationwide. I believe the whole system is using these tactics to force compliance to mandatory influenza vaccination.

Please protect us from these tactics.

Sincerely,
XXXXX RN BSN

(Please do not use my name.)

11/11/13

To Whom it May Concern in regards to AF247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption)

I am for this bill. I believe it is a persons personal right to choose their health care. NO ONE should be forced to be injected with foreign substances that are toxic to the body in fear of loosing their job. There are side effects of the flu vaccine- just read the package insert. The employer will not take responsibility for the damage done by the vaccine, only the employee will suffer thru that.

The flu vaccine is an experiment we are being forced to be involved in. This is not right! There is also a question of the effectiveness of the vaccine. Why force the risk on people when it has such a poor track record?

I do not believe employers have the right or should be given the right to dictate my health care.

Sincerely,
(name withheld)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: LAT <latatnall@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 7:29 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

I am a wife, mother and Registered Nurse who is against any and all vaccinations. Vaccines have affected me personally and professionally. I have had severe reactions to vaccinations when I was a child and once as an adult.

As an adult, I had one flu shot. I was sick and in bed, suffering for three months after receiving the shot that I was assured was necessary and good for me. Ever since that flu shot in 1995, I have been plagued with multiple allergies, a depressed immune system and increased migraines. I also go through periods of dizzy spells that last for one to two weeks (never had that before the flu vaccination). These spells still happen at least once a year. I feel that I got off lucky with these horrible side effects. There are many others that suffer long lasting neurological problems (dystonia, narcolepsy, other horrific health problems and even death from these vaccines.

As a mother to three children, I am very fortunate to have learned how dangerous vaccines are before I had all of my children vaccinated according to the schedule. My oldest had three rounds of childhood vaccines. I always wondered why he was so sick. Once I stopped getting him immunized, his health improved. My two youngest children did not get any vaccinations. They are the healthiest children you will ever meet. They typically receive perfect attendance at school because they never get ill like their peers. I have utilized the exemption forms for the state of Wisconsin to prevent my children from having to go through the suffering I have gone through. My daughter is now 20, and she teaches her friends and their families about the vaccination lies. I am proud that she is able to do her own research on the harm vaccines are doing to people and isn't afraid to share it.

As a professional in the medical field, mandatory vaccinations at most health care facilities affect me greatly. With my allergies and adverse reactions, I cannot have a flu shot or any other vaccine. The majority of my co workers blindly accept the flu shot without understanding the long term consequences. As with anything one puts into their body, it should be by choice. No one should be required to be injected with toxins that cause cancer, illness and long term health problems. Below I have listed some of the ingredients in a typical flu shot or vaccine. Would you want any of these in your body?

VACCINES **

1. FLUZONE by Sanofi Pasteur ([FDA link](#))



**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Octylphenol Ethoxylate: Immunotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

2. FLUVIRIN by Novartis ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Beta-Propiolactone: Carcinogen
Nonylphenol Ethoxylate: Immunotoxin
Neomycin: Immunotoxin
Polymyxin: Neurotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

3. FLUMIST by MedImmune, LLC ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Dibasic Potassium Phosphate: Immunotoxin
Gentamicin Sulfate: Nephrotoxic
Monobasic Potassium Phosphate: Immunotoxin
Monosodium Glutamate: Neurotoxin

4. FLULAVAL by GlaxoSmithKline ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Sodium Deoxycholate: Immunotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

5. FLUARIX by GlaxoSmithKline ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Gentamicin Sulfate: Nephrotoxic
Hydrocortisone: Myelin Degenerator
Octoxynol 10: Immunotoxin
Polysorbate 80: Sterile Agent
Sodium Deoxycholate: Immunotoxin

People need a choice. No employer should be able to force these harmful substances into an employee's body for any reason. Those that want to opt out should be able to opt out. There should be no negative consequence for declining any immunization. I will continue to lobby for choice. I beg of you - please pass AB247 for

everyones' health.

Thank you for your time,
Leigh Ann Tatnall, RN

Sent from my iPad

Matthews, Meagan

From: Mercedes Borchardt <mercedes.borchardt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 11:23 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccination Exemption Bill
Attachments: Influenza Vaccine Bill.docx; flu exemption.docx

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I have been meaning to write to you since I read an article about your work on the influenza vaccine exemption bill back in May. I heard about a committee hearing on this bill tomorrow. I regret that I am unable to attend the hearing, but I do wish you would read my personal testimony and present it on my behalf. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help.

Attached you will find my personal testimony on how the mandation has effected me and a letter I wrote to my employer when my request for exemption was denied.

Sincerely,
Mercedes Borchardt
414-232-5717

November 12, 2013

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt and Committee,

I am an employee of Aurora Health Care. In 2011, Aurora implemented a mandatory flu vaccination policy. This meant that all employees had to receive the flu vaccination by a deadline of December 31, 2011, or face "voluntary termination". Word of this policy created panic in the work environment. Many employees did not want to get the vaccination but also did not want to lose their jobs, especially during the holiday time and a recession. One of my coworkers started a petition to refuse the vaccination. That petition however was quickly confiscated and the employee reprimanded. While Aurora mandated the flu vaccination, they did also offer an exemption for those who did not or could not take the vaccine. This however was not as easily obtained as it may seem. The requirements for a medical exemption were very specific and few qualified, including me. So I completed the form for the religious exemption and submitted it by the required deadline. To my dismay, my exemption request was denied. I attempted to appeal this decision over the phone and I was told my reason "did not fit the criteria for a religious exemption". I argued their decision and again submitted a more detailed reason for my request, stating that I had prayed about this dilemma and truly felt that I could not take the vaccine. I was denied a second and third time. I was told to put in my resignation so that my personal time off would be paid out to me. This response I received was very upsetting; it caused much personal anguish and stress. I did not want to get the vaccine but I also did not want to risk my job by not complying with Aurora's mandation. After my exemption request was denied and it appeared that the decision would not be overturned, I turned to my manager and Chief Nursing Supervisor for help. I was told by them "this decision has been made by people higher up than us, we hope that you will change your mind, but if not, we will miss you." It was not until after I submitted a letter in writing (see attached) to the Vice President/Patient Safety Officer and Vice President of Care Management that my exemption was finally accepted (on December 30, 2011). I am now exempt from getting the flu vaccination; however I must resubmit my request by the required deadline each year. Aurora employs around 30,000 people. I am unsure of the number that filed for exemption, but I have been told I was 1 of 19 that was accepted.

I feel very strongly about the mandation of the flu vaccination. I believe it is against our Constitutional Rights and that this Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill should be made a law. No employer should have the ability to force its employees to take a vaccine. Each year my heart goes out to my fellow coworkers who themselves do not want the vaccine, but feel they do not have any other choice. Some have even suffered adverse reactions to the vaccine. Please pass this bill for myself and all of the other health care workers whose rights are violated by this mandation. You can find some helpful facts on the influenza vaccine and others in Vaccine Safety Manual for Concerned Families and Health Care Practitioners by Neil Z Miller. I urge you to read the facts and listen to our testimonies. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mercedes Borchardt

December 28, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

I do not wish to terminate my employment with Aurora Health Care, however receiving the flu vaccine is against my religious beliefs and I cannot bring myself to receive the vaccine in any form (including Flu Mist or Preservative-Free).

I filed for religious exemption on September 30, 2011 originally stating, that my body is a temple of the Lord and I do not want to put anything in my body that could cause harm or illness. This reason was denied in a letter that I received on December 8, 2011 which stated, *in part* that the information I provided was insufficient to establish my eligibility for a religious-based exemption.

I have requested and been denied a religious exemption, and I wish to stress again, I do not wish to voluntarily terminate my employment with Aurora Health Care. But in following the natural law God ordained, it is my religious belief that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. This is a tenet of my religion. As such I believe I am forbidden from introducing unclean, unknown and/or poisons into my body. Since the body is God's Temple, I cannot pollute it. I believe that taking the Flu vaccine violates this tenet of my religion.

I have prayed and put this matter of flu vaccination before God and truly believe that I am not supposed to put it in my body. As directed in a letter dated December 1, 2011, I explained this to Rhonda Taylor Parris during our phone conversation and the reasons she gave me for my exemption denial was that I have received other vaccinations and that I take Ibuprofen and vitamins. The vaccines I have received were childhood vaccines, which were the choice of my parents. Vaccinations do not give permanent immunity. They only delay mild childhood diseases such as measles into adulthood when they become killer diseases. God knows better. I do take ibuprofen and vitamins occasionally, but that is not the issue at hand and I am not morally against them. I am however against vaccination and believe that the practice of vaccination introduces pollutants and unclean residues into my body.

When I was not granted an exemption, I was dismayed. Since I do not wish to voluntarily terminate my employment, I carefully reviewed Aurora's Influenza Immunization Policy (No. 197)(5/11):

Failure to comply with the immunization policy will result in written warning. If an individual is not vaccinated or granted an exemption within two (2) weeks of the warning, they will be subject to further corrective action up to termination of employment.

See -- Aurora's Influenza Immunization Policy (No. 197) section IV. B. E.

I cannot take the flu vaccine due to my religious beliefs. I do not want to terminate my employment with Aurora. If by not getting the flu vaccine I am terminated, this will be the most extreme form of adverse corrective action; Policy #197 describes "termination" not "voluntary termination." Termination for my religious-based refusal to receive the Flu vaccination will be **involuntary and punitive**. Further, it appears that the adverse personnel action discussed in recent letters and memos will be in breach of Aurora's stated policy

(Policy # 197) since I am offered no other correction action and no accommodation has been presented by management.

I am again requesting an exemption or some other form of accommodation that will allow me to continue my employment with Aurora in my present position.

I firmly subscribe to Aurora's purpose – "we help people live well." And, I certainly understand the need to protect our patients from harm. I do and will continue to perform my job in a manner that protects our patients, my co-workers, and the entire Aurora family. I entered my profession with the firm commitment to offer the best possible nursing care. I am dedicated to continue to perform my duties so my patients will be assured of respect for and attention to their health concerns. By refusing to introduce the Flu vaccine into my body – which I believe to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit – in no way detracts from my devotion or ability to faithfully fulfill my nursing responsibilities. To be forced to violate one of the major tenets of my religion unfairly places me in a personal dilemma.

I wish to restate my position so it is clear: I am opposed to vaccinations for religious reasons. I do not resign from my position and any termination or corrective actions that results from me not receiving the vaccine will be punitive, not voluntary.

Sincerely,

Mercedes Borchardt

414-232-5717

mercedes.borchardt@gmail.com

11/12/13

(24)

Dear Sir,

I would like to remain anonymous. I am writing to tell you my story. I have to get the flu shot as a term of employment. I have worked for ProHealth Care for 10 years. I don't think it is fair. I am a nursing mother of an infant less than 6 months of age, and the entire package insert states "It is not known whether this vaccine is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when this vaccine is administered to a nursing mother."

I feel it should be my choice whether I want to feed this medication to my infant via breast milk. My patients have a choice to refuse vaccines. Do you think once they administer this vaccine, I am now their patient? Where are my rights? Please Help!

XXXXXXXXXX, RN

25

Matthews, Meagan

From: John <jkinning@frontier.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:28 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am contacting you to show support for AB247. I have been in health care for over 20 years and never have I had to have the flu shot. I have never had the influenza, and being a health care professional and having cared for thousands of people the most important thing to do in prevention is washing hands. Herd inoculation has been proven ineffective as viruses do mutate, hence the CDC choice influenza vaccines is only 40-50% effective, in young healthy adults it should remain a choice not a requirement by law.

I am currently employed by a large North Central Wisconsin hospital who up until this year did not mandate this massive intrusion into my personal life/ body. I am a Christian and currently trying to get a religious waiver. This is a lengthy process with more intrusive questions to be answered.

One of the hurdles of the proposed bill is the large number of major companies that oppose it. Correct me if I am wrong but government is for the people and by the people, not large corp, and PACS. I support your efforts 100% and will do as much as I can to garner even more support.

--
John Kinning

11/12/13

I am a nurse who was forced to get a flu shot and would have been fired by October 31. This is the first time I have gotten the flu shot. Seventeen days after that shot I got pneumonia. I have NEVER had any lung infections in the past. In the CDC information they say you can be more likely to get pneumonia after the shot.

The flu shot is suppose to protect against 3 strains of flu-ONLY 3! There are hundreds of other bacteria and viruses we could get sick from. If the healthcare system is interested in protecting patients, all healthcare workers should wear a mask all winter. The efficacy of the flu shot is between 50-65%. And that is if you are exposed to 1 of the 3 strains in the shot. Many years the strains in the shot are NOT are the strains that are going around that year. (The CDC makes a **guess** as to which strains to use each year.) When looking at these numbers, how can they require these bogus shots.

My other issue is that we don't know what long term affects the flu shot will have on us. AsI found out, I am more susceptible to pneumonia with the flu shot. But what about Alzheimers and other long term diseases.

I am only 1 of thousands of healthcare workers who object to the required flu shots.

Please pass this bill to protect our healthcare worker.

Thank you, XXXXXXXXX

11/12/13

next
8 pages

Representative Thiesfeldt,
attached is my letter speaking on why we need a bill to protect our employment in regards to the flu shot as well as some of the forms that my company is forcing us to sign if we do decline. Please add my STRONG, PASSIONATE support for this bill!!! If possible please dont use the name of my hospital, but feel free to use my name. While i am risking termination, this is too important to let go.

thanks for your help in this!!!
Respectfully,
XXXXXX (Rep. Thiesfeldt omitted it just in case.)

11/12/13

Representative Thiesfeldt,

First, thank you for supporting the workers of this state and addressing the freedom of choice as to what we put in our bodies! At one time this would have seemed a pointless comment, but in today's age, it is one of our most important and personal freedoms!

I am writing this in lieu of speaking in person, only for the anonymity that it provides. My heart and passion to speak in the public hearing cry out, yet my need to remain employed has to override my heart and passion. You see, I am an IT worker for several hospitals and clinics in and around Green Bay. I have ZERO patient contact and Rarely am required to enter either the hospitals or clinics. Yet by company policy I am required to get a flu shot.

As companies go, mine has been more accommodating than others that I have heard of, but that accommodation has been slowly lessening over the last several years. Originally, when my hospital started requiring the flu shot, they allowed anyone to just opt out. No form, no letters, you just don't have to get it if you don't want to. I of course didn't get it. Last year, same policy only now you had to sign a declination form (see attachment 1) that said I decline and acknowledge that by doing so I was endangering my health and those of my coworkers, family and my community. Talk about a heavy burden. This year they provided a similar option for employees with one MAJOR exception (attachment 2). This year in order to decline, the employee had to have the signature of either a doctor stating you were allergic or from your "spiritual leader" saying it was a violation of a MAJOR part of your religion and by getting the shot it would violate your religion. This effectively took away our rights as citizens to refuse the shot. I was able to find a leader who would sign; however, I have several people in my immediate area that were unable or unwilling to find someone that would sign. This basically took their right to refuse and gave it to someone that they may or may not agree with on the subject. Additionally, the person that would sign would also be acknowledging that refusing the flu shot was endangering family, coworkers and the community. This has got to stop.

As to why I am refusing the shot. There are actually several reasons;

1. It's my right to put only what I choose into my body. This is literally our last bastion of freedom. It's our only freedom that is so personal that if the government or our employer can dictate what we have to put in our bodies, we are no longer a free person. Regardless of what the benefits to society are, it should be our choice. When the needs of the many become the reason for doing something to the individual, we have lost our freedom.

2. The effectiveness of the shot it's self. (See attached article from John Hopkins Peter Doshi, PHD [Interview with Doc Doshi Attachment 3](#)). Dr. Doshi says "The vaccine may be less beneficial and less safe than has been claimed and the threat of influenza seems to be overstated". Even the CDC acknowledges that the studies finding any reduction in death rates may be do the "healthy-user effect" In other words; people that get the flu shot are typically healthier than those that do not skewing the results. Also from the interview - "For most people, and possibly most doctors, officials need only claim that vaccines save lives, and it is assumed there must be solid research behind it," says Doshi. Unfortunately, that's not the case, he says. A study of thousands done by the Cochrane group found

that it offered zero protection against what the CDC is saying it protects us from. A separate study released in February shows that the flu shot is only 9% effective for seniors and offers no protection for children. Which leads to the safety.

3. The safety of the shot. According to Dr. Richard Blaylock the "vaccine is Not safe". The multi dose flu shot has a preservative that contains mercury in it. Mercury is "toxic to the brain" says Dr. Blaylock. He continues "the flu vaccines don't prevent the flu but actually increase the odds of getting it. The Mercury contained in the vaccines is such a strong immune depressant that the flu shot suppresses the immunity for several weeks." Another study I have found concluded that the flu shot taken over a 3-5 year period increased the risk of Alzheimer's by 10 times! Scary how we have seen such steep increases in Alzheimer's and Autism over the last decade. Funny how the studies on these diseases claim an increase in mercury in the brain... coincident? I don't think so and this is one of the primary reasons I refuse and will continue to refuse even at the cost of my job. Think of the ramifications of this. We know mercury is an issue; our hospital has made a HUGE deal of it when we finally removed all mercury thermometers! And yet they feel its ok to inject the same mercury into our blood! It makes ZERO sense!


In closing, while I personally will refuse to take the flu shot, if someone else chooses to, that is their choice, who am I to force my beliefs on someone else. I have presented the info I have studied to others in my area of work and this year 7 of 14 refused to get the shot based on the info I presented and what they found on their own. However, of the 7, only 3 were able to get someone else to "approve" their refusal. That means 4 of my friends and coworkers were injected with something they disapproved of, and were forced to get the shot for the sole reason of keeping their job. It's great my company offers a way to decline; however, I feel it's even more despicable because "officially" they offer this to their employees and it looks all wonderful to the outside, but the reality is they have made it even worse for those that choose to refuse the shot. These people are in my opinion literally "taking one for their families (team)" and in the process potentially slowly killing themselves.

Above all you may believe what the shot does or doesn't do, what it contains or doesn't contain, this should be left to the individual to decide and it shouldn't be a decision based on coercion. The person looking to decide what is best for him/her should weigh the benefits of the shot over the side effects, NOT whether or not that decision will cost them a job! By making our jobs a "benefit" of getting the shot, in today's economy, most will have to get the shot regardless of whether or not they think it will work. That is the WRONG reason to get it.

Declination of Influenza Vaccination 2012-2013

My employer, _____, as a member of Hospital _____ has requested that I receive the seasonal influenza vaccination in order to protect myself, my coworkers and the patients we serve.

I acknowledge that I am aware of the following facts:

- 
- Hospitalizations in the U.S., due to the flu, number in the hundreds of thousands and deaths number in the tens of thousands according to the CDC.
 - Influenza vaccination is recommended for me and all other healthcare workers to prevent influenza disease and its complications, including death.
 - If I contract influenza, I will shed the virus for 24--48 hours **before** influenza symptoms appear. My shedding the virus can spread influenza infection to patients in this facility.
 - If I become infected with influenza, even when my symptoms are mild, I can spread severe illness to others.
 - I understand that the strains of virus that cause influenza infection change almost every year, which is why a different influenza vaccine is recommended each year.
 - I cannot get the influenza disease from the influenza vaccine.
 - The consequences of my refusing to be vaccinated could endanger my health and the health of those with whom I have contact, including:
 - Patients in this healthcare setting
 - My coworkers
 - My family
 - My community

Despite these facts, I am choosing to decline influenza vaccination at present time.

Please choose one of the following reasons:

I am declining the influenza immunization (please circle reason below):

1. Allergies to Eggs or Vaccines
2. Do not like Shots
3. Flu Shot does not work
4. History of Guillain-Barre
5. Personal Choice
6. Pregnancy
7. Previous Reaction
8. Religious Reasons
9. Side-Effect Concerns

I understand that I will be required to wear a mask, while working, if I am not vaccinated during a period of influenza activity as defined by policy and determined by the local system.

I have read and fully understand the information on this declination form.

Signature: _____

Name (print): _____ Department: _____ ID Badge # _____

Name (print) of individual accepting declination: _____ ID Badge # _____

FLU / declination / 2012-2013 revised 8/20/12 JR

2013-2014 INFLUENZA VACCINATION WRITTEN DECLINATION FORM

I, _____ CAN NOT RECIEVE A FLU SHOT.

Print Name
Department _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I acknowledge that I am aware of the following facts:

- Influenza is a serious respiratory disease; on average, 36,000 Americans die every year from influenza-related causes.
- Influenza virus may be shed for up to 24 hours before symptoms begin, increasing the risk of transmission to others.
- Some people with influenza have no symptoms, increasing the risk of transmission to others.
- Influenza virus changes often, making annual vaccination necessary.
- I understand that the influenza vaccine cannot transmit influenza and it does not prevent all disease.
- I have declined to receive the influenza vaccine for the 2013-2014 season. I acknowledge that influenza vaccination is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for all healthcare workers in order to prevent infection from and transmission of influenza and its complications, including death, to patients, my coworkers, my family, and my community.



Knowing these facts, I decline vaccination at this time and am utilizing the Medical or Religious Exemption as evidenced by the signature of my physician or religious leader. I may change my mind and accept vaccination later, if vaccine is available. If I choose to receive the vaccine after masking levels are in effect, I will be required to continue to mask for 14 days after immunization. I have read and fully understand the information on this declination form.

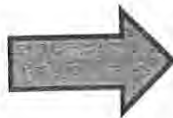
I decline vaccination for the following reason(s). Please check one.

I have a medical contraindication to receiving the vaccine.

_____ Physician Name (Please Print)	_____ Physician Signature
_____ Date Signed	_____ Phone Number

My philosophical or religious beliefs prohibit vaccination.

A religious waiver is allowed only if the influenza vaccination will violate a central belief of your religion. Any justification would need to be based on religion, not science, and does not include held beliefs regarding secular, cultural or political matters.



Signature _____ Date _____
Religious Leader

Please return the completed form to the People Department by November 1, 2013.

2013_2014 Influenza Declination.

(copied from <http://www.newsmaxhealth.com/Headline/influenza-virus-flu-vaccine-Peter-Doshi-Ph-D-/2013/05/16/id/504942> for your convenience)

Johns Hopkins Scientist Slams Flu Vaccine

Thursday, 16 May 2013 06:33 PM
By Sylvia Booth Hubbard

A Johns Hopkins scientist has issued a blistering report on influenza vaccines in the British Medical Journal (BMJ). Peter Doshi, Ph.D., charges that although the vaccines are being pushed on the public in unprecedented numbers, they are less effective and cause more side effects than alleged by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Further, says Doshi, the studies that underlie the CDC's policy of encouraging most people to get a yearly flu shot are often low quality studies that do not substantiate the official claims.

Promoting influenza vaccines is one of the most visible and aggressive public health policies in the United States, says Doshi of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Drug companies and public officials press for widespread vaccination each fall, offering vaccinations in drugstores and supermarkets. The results have been phenomenal. Only 20 years ago, 32 million doses of influenza vaccine were available in the United States on an annual basis. Today, the total has skyrocketed to 135 million doses.

"The vaccine may be less beneficial and less safe than has been claimed, and the threat of influenza seems to be overstated," Doshi says. Mandatory vaccination policies have been enacted, often in healthcare facilities, forcing some people to take the vaccine under threat of losing their jobs.

The main assertion of the CDC that fuels the push for flu vaccines each year is that influenza comes with a risk of serious complications which can cause death, especially in senior citizens and those suffering from chronic illnesses. That's not the case, said Doshi.

When read carefully, the CDC acknowledges that studies finding any perceived reduction in death rates may be due to the "healthy-user effect" — the tendency for healthier people to be vaccinated more than less-healthy people. The only randomized trial of influenza vaccine in older people found no decrease in deaths. "This means that influenza vaccines are approved for use in older people despite any clinical trials demonstrating a reduction in serious outcomes," says Doshi.

Even when the vaccine is closely matched to the type of influenza that's prevalent, which doesn't happen every year, randomized, controlled trials of healthy adults found that vaccinating between 33 and 100 people resulted in one less case of influenza. In addition, says Doshi, no evidence exists to show that this reduction in the risk of influenza for a specific population — here in the United States, among healthy adults, for example — extrapolates into any reduced risk of serious complications from influenza, such as hospitalizations or deaths, among seniors.

"For most people, and possibly most doctors, officials need only claim that vaccines save lives, and it is assumed there must be solid research behind it," says Doshi. Unfortunately, that's not the case, he says.

Although the CDC implies that flu vaccines are safe and there's no need to weigh benefits against risk, Doshi disagrees. He points to an Australian study that found one in every 110 children under the age of five had convulsions following vaccinations in 2009 for H1N1 influenza. Additional investigations found that the H1N1 vaccine was also associated with a spike in cases of narcolepsy among adolescents.

Doshi's concerns echo those of Dr. Russell Blaylock, a neurosurgeon and author of "The Blaylock Wellness Report" who has deep concerns over the safety and efficacy of the flu vaccine.

Not only is the vaccine not safe, Dr. Blaylock tells Newsmax Health, it doesn't even work. "The vaccine is completely worthless, and the government knows it," he says. "There are three reasons the government tells the elderly why they should get flu shots: secondary pneumonia, hospitalization, and death. Yet a study by the Cochrane group studied hundreds of thousands of people and found it offered zero protection for those three things in the general community. It offered people in nursing homes some immunity against the flu — at best one-third — but that was only if they picked the right vaccine."

A study released in February found that the flu shot was only 9 percent effective in protecting seniors against the 2012-2013 season's most virulent influenza bug.

What's even worse is that small children who are given the flu vaccine get no protection from the disease. "The government also says that every baby over the age of six months should have a vaccine, and they know it contains a dose of mercury that is toxic to the brain," says Dr. Blaylock. "They also know the studies have shown that the flu vaccine has zero — zero — effectiveness in children under five."

For most people, says Dr. Blaylock, flu vaccines don't prevent the flu but actually increase the odds of getting it. The mercury contained in vaccines is such a strong immune depressant that a flu shot suppresses immunity for several weeks. "This makes people highly susceptible to catching the flu," he says. "They may even think the vaccine gave them the flu, but that's not true — it depressed their immune system and then they caught the flu."

Mercury overstimulates the brain for several years, says Dr. Blaylock, and that activation is the cause of Alzheimer's and other degenerative diseases. One study found that those who get the flu vaccine for three to five years increase their risk of Alzheimer's disease 10-fold.

Doshi asserts that influenza is a case of "disease mongering" in an effort to expand markets. He points to the fact that deaths from flu declined sharply during the middle of the 20th century, long before the huge vaccine campaigns that kicked off the 21st century.

Why do drug companies push the flu vaccine? "It's all about money," says Dr. Blaylock. "Vaccines are a pharmaceutical company's dream. They have a product that both the government and the media will help them sell, and since vaccines are protected, they can't be sued if anyone has a complication."

Doshi's article "is a breath of fresh air," says Dr. Blaylock. "This article exposes in well-defined and articulate terms what has been known for a long time — the flu vaccine promotion is a fraud.

"Here's the bottom line," says Dr. Blaylock. "The vast number of people who get the flu vaccine aren't going to get any benefit, but they get all of the risks and complications."

11/12/13

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I am so happy to see that a hearing has been scheduled to address AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill)! I strongly support this bill and although I cannot appear in person, I would like to share my testimony for you to submit on my behalf. I would appreciate it if you would withhold my name in connection with this statement as I am currently attempting to obtain a vaccine exemption at my place of employment and do not want to **jeopardize** my chances. Thank you for working on behalf of health care workers across Wisconsin!

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX

November 11, 2013

To the Assembly Committee on Health,

I have worked as a licensed practical nurse for 37 years. I am presently employed at a small, rural clinic in western Wisconsin. Last February my employer sent out a facility wide email stating that anyone not receiving the influenza vaccine by November 1, 2013 would be terminated. It came as quite a shock to many of us that our employer would go to this extreme in obtaining flu shot compliance and even more shocking, that this was even legal. Our CEO stated that this new policy was being announced early enough in the year so that anyone who wanted would have the time to obtain other employment. This was like a slap in the face to those of us who have spent our whole career serving others. I immediately began searching for a new job, but between living in a rural area and the slowing down of the economy, I have not been able to find other work. I have also been subject to varying comments from co workers and management alike, criticizing my opinion on the flu vaccine.

I have had to put up with statements at my job such as:

- You deserve to be fired (from a co worker).
- Don't think you can get a job anywhere else. Everyone is doing this (from my supervisor)
- Those religious nuts and their anti flu vaccine beliefs are driving me nuts (from a provider)
- You can always quit your job and go work someplace else if you don't want the vaccine (from our CEO)
- I have yet to see a religion that prohibits flu vaccines (from our human resources director)

Not only is my right to make my own health care choices being denied, but I am being subjected to statements and accusations that nobody should have to put up with in the workplace. Is this really what being a citizen of the United States means? That only a select group has the right to exercise their freedom? Why is it against the law for the government to force an individual to receive unwanted interference in their health care, but it is legal for an employer to do so?

My research this past summer has shown that the efficacy of the flu vaccine is mediocre at best. While the medical community does not want it publicized, seeing as it is generally

considered safe, there are instances of an individual being stricken with serious side effects as a result of this vaccine. What about those of us not willing to take that risk?

As a nurse, my license and job would be taken from me if I forced a patient to accept any type of treatment that went against their wishes. I ask that you allow healthcare workers to be given the same respect in regards to deciding whether they will receive the flu vaccine.

As of today, I am waiting to hear if I can be exempted from taking the vaccine based on a "sincerely held personal belief". This exemption will only be granted if I can supply a letter from my clergy and pass an intense interrogation from members of a board chosen by my administration. If I am not granted this exemption I will have the choice of either receiving the vaccine against my will, or being terminated.

I ask that you vote in favor of this bill and protect the rights of health care workers across the state. We are citizens and individuals just like anyone else and deserve to be given the freedom to direct our own health care decisions. No one should have to choose between a vaccine and their job.

Thank you for your time.

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Liz Schreck <justracing20@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:26 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Re: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled

I would like this letter to be considered for the fight against requirement for flu shot. I am totally against forcing someone to get a flu shot & they have your back against the wall when they say "it's the shot or your job." I have never had the flu shot & it has always been my choice. I work in the airline industry for 19yrs without getting it. Why do I want a virus in me???? I don't. Even reading about how many strains of the flu there are, there's no guarantee I won't get it even with the shot. This should be a personal choice. Please stop this madness. I have seen many of my coworkers with sad faces because they didn't have a choice.

11/11/13

I am employed by a healthcare facility which requires the flu vaccine for employment. I have worked for this company for over 20 years and never had the flu shot until it was forced upon me two years ago. The first year I received two threatening letters from my employer after requesting an exemption. I ended up taking the flu shot in order to keep my job.

After receiving an allergy test, I discovered I am allergic to one of the ingredients in the flu shot. Each time I receive the flu shot I have acquired uncomfortable side effects including headaches, dizziness and nausea. But, unless one has a life threatening condition that requires emergency medical attention you do not qualify for exemption. So, I guess to qualify you would need to die first.

I understand the reason for encouraging employees to take the vaccine, but I disagree with the policy that requires me to take it for fear of losing my job.

I also object to putting formaldehyde and other objectionable ingredients into my body, unless it would be needed for a disease I am known to be suffering from.

In addition, I have no direct patient contact, and I work from home, so it would seem the flu shot mandate would not be necessary for my employment.

Anonymous

(31)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: I foster <lfoster@goldenyearsofwalworth.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Bill AB 247

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,
While I am living in Wisconsin district 32, I still want to let you know that I support you and the other representatives in regards to bill 247. You are spot on in your reasoning. Many of my colleagues in the field of healthcare will disagree with sound reasoning, but there are many who are voicing exactly what this bill stands for. My prayer is that this bill will pass. I thank you and those in the assembly who are making a stand on this over inflated issue.

Sincerely,
Laura Foster RN-ADON
lfoster@goldenyearsofwalworth.com
Golden Years of Walworth
270 Ridge Road
Walworth WI, 53184
262-394-1716

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: drbrandon@fletcher-chiropractic.com
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: My Forced Vaccination

Dear state representative Thiesfeldt,
My name is Dr. Brandon Fletcher. I am a chiropractor in the Oshkosh community. I was recently forced out of Aurora insurance due to refusing to take the Flu vaccine. Even with providing their review board with adequate information about the flu vaccine and personal feelings. I was still denied and can no longer treat patients as a "in network doctor." Forcing those patients to pay higher premiums for no clinical reason. I'm not giving my patients any less care because of my lack of vaccination.
Aurora is trying to dictate how I practice as a clinician. They have instilled fear in their own workers by threatening with loss of job if they do not get vaccinated by a certain time. Till then Aurora is forcing their employees to wear masks with stickers that say "I'm not vaccinated". I have friends and family that work for this Hospital, so this is not speculation.
My larger fear about this forced vaccination is not the flu. It is what is next? Why not force us all to get the HPV vaccine or Shingles. It is a loss of personal choice and freedom. What is worse if the research from around the world shows that the flu vaccine is minimally effective with minimal change on the death toll. This is not small pox or some major plague that is killing uncontrollably. This is is the Flu and it will come every year with a new strain and design. We as a society should understand, that we can not control the flu and forcing people to think we can, is a joke.
Overall I support you on your way to Madison. If you need any more information please let me know.

-Brandon Fletcher D.C.

1/2 (33)

Matthews, Meagan

From: ZombieTaunTaun <zombietauntaun@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:01 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: responding to your email about the vaccination and would like this read.

To Whom it may concern:

I worked at the Dunn County Health Care Center as a nurse's aide for the past 24 years in that 24 years I was never in trouble for anything. 2 years ago the facility I worked at wanted us to get a flu shot or you were mandated to wear a mask. The first year I wore the mask from December until the first part of June. This past year I wore the mask from December to the weekend before Memorial weekend. The one thing you have to understand, I work in a facility that the average temperature of the building is 85-90 degrees depending in what part of the building you are working at. In April I had went home from heat exhaustion from the heat, but also from wearing the mask for almost 7 hours straight. We are not allowed to take the mask off only at break times. So I decided after talking to the state people on the phone who in part said that that "the State does not mandate facilities to get the flu shot nor do they mandate people to wear a mask". It is up to the facility to decide that. And also I checked the CDC website that said that the flu was done in our area as of May 18th. With both of those factors in place I decided to no longer wear the mask. I was told by nurse in charge to wear it. I politely told her no and why I would not.

The following week I was brought into my Director of Nurses office and was told by her and the Adminstrator to leave, I assumed I was fired, but later found out I was put on Administration leave. I was not called for almost 3 weeks and when I went in to plead my case I was treated disrespectfully and then the next day was fired through a letter in the mail.

I worked with girls where the DON would make remarks such as " are you ready to get the shot yet" I was given dirty looks from the DON when I would have the mask just below my nose so I could get a little fresh air and there were no residents in my proximity. I would be in the nurses office with my mask down, and was given a dirty look and told " we don't do that." This is also the same woman who told me that after I talked to her about having heat exhaustion that I could go in a residents room as long as it was empty or the stairwell and take my mask off to get some air. Well working in a nursing home there is not enough time in the day to do what she suggested and after talking to the State people, had I been caught by a State person I would be in big trouble if caught with my mask down. So I was screwed either way.

I am all for protecting the residents that I worked with, but what about the safety of the people who are required to get a shot just so they can keep their job? If I get cancer from this stupid shot will they provide my children with a mom and a wife for my husband? Will they take care of my family financially, probably not! They have not proven to me that the shot is even safe, nor that it is 100% effective. I am a intelligent woman and have done my research on vaccinations and from my findings they are not safe nor do they provide the protection for the elderly that I have taken care of.

In closing, I loved the residents that I provided care for, but after losing my job I had to reevaluate whether I wanted to be put in the position again of being forced to wear a mask for 6 months of the year or get the shot. I was good at what I did, but I just couldn't go through the headache of this again.

We live in America where it is increasingly becoming a society that cares only for the mighty dollar, that the government feels the need to take care of us whether we want it to or not and infringing upon the rights of individual people whether it makes sense or not, just so the government can fill its pockets with money. The flu shot is not about protection it is all about money.

Sincerely,

2/2

Kelly Pember

I have to work that day otherwise I would be down there speaking..best wishes to you and thank you for taking up the fight and it is a fight!

Matthews, Meagan

From: Lynn Hutchinson <glhutch@live.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 9:17 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

Hello Representative Thiesfeldt. Although I do not reside within your district, I hope you do not mind hearing from me as I am in the 69th and am without representation until after the upcoming election. It is my understanding that AB247 is currently under consideration and you are a co-sponser. I would like to express support for the legislation as does my wife. We are both full time employees of the Marshfield Clinic with 27 years for me and 15 years for her. As you probably know, the clinic is requiring all employees to receive the annual flu vaccine or face termination. Neither of us are the least bit comfortable with either the effectiveness or safety of the vaccine and would never decide on our own to be vaccinated. As a result, we face the loss of both of our full time jobs or agree to vaccination. We of course would like you to pass along our concerns to the assembly and lend our support to you and the other Representatives who are working to pass AB247. Thank you.

(35)

Matthews, Meagan

From: rebekah petrie <beck_peachtree@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:48 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory Vaccine exeption bill

Hello,
I am writing to give testimony to the mandatory vaccine exemption bill.
My name is Rebekah Tank, On October 31, 2012, I was 6 month pregnant and lost my job and my family's health insurance because I refused to take the mandatory flu vaccine. I was denied personal, medical, and religious exemption. I was told I had no proof that the vaccine would harm me or my baby even though the insert with the shot said " not proven safe or effective for pregnant or nursing mothers. " My family and I fought very hard to find a way around this. We heard alot of support for what we were trying to do, but in the end we ran out of time and I lost my job. Nobody should have to chose keeping their job over protecting their baby. Agnesian Healthcare made it VERY clear they did not care about my what happened to my baby as long as I took the vaccine! That's WRONG! I hope this help's end this madness.
Thank you for giving us a voice on this subject.
Sincerely, Rebekah Tank

11/13

(36)

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,
As I am unable to attend the hearing for AB247 in person, I would ask that you intercede for myself, and other health care workers who have a personal interest in this bill. For obvious reasons, being risk of losing my job, I request to remain anonymous. I am in the process of attempting a Religious exemption, based on my beliefs, but have minimal confidence in it being granted.

If a copy of my clinic's **Immunization of Clinic Workers** policy, or email "warnings about non-compliance" would be helpful, please send me a fax number to send it to. Thank you.

To whom it may concern:
As I am unable to attend the public hearing for AB 247, I wish to have my thoughts shared before the committee.

I am an RN of over 30 years and consider myself well-informed on both sides of the issue, from a public health and personal safety perspective.

I personally have taken the vaccine in past years, and abstained in more recent years. I have taken the time to research and inform myself about vaccines, and have made my own risk/benefit conclusions. What I strongly object to, is any law that makes it mandatory for an individual to have a foreign substance injected into their body against their will or beliefs.

I currently work in a telephone-based nursing role with minimal exposure to patients. I have a family history of vaccine-precipitated Guillan-Barre syndrome. These reasons alone are not adequate to exempt me from having to get an employer-mandated flu vaccine.

I have been employed as a Registered Nurse since 1976, and with my current employer for the past 16 years. For 2013, my employer has mandated that 100% of its staff will receive the flu vaccine this year by 12/1/13, with loss of employment for non-compliance. While some may argue that I have a "choice" in this matter- find a different job or field to work in- I would argue that having vested over 40 years of my life training for and continuing my knowledge in this career, it is asking a tremendous sacrifice of myself and others in my position to forfeit experience, seniority and a job that I enjoy, because I choose to stand up for my decision not to receive this vaccine.

Having made it my mission to be proactive in my own preventive health care, I find it a direct contradiction to my beliefs, to knowingly inject a substance containing known carcinogens *(formaldehyde, mercury, Triton X 100) and pathogens (potentially contaminated or diseased chicken material) into my body. Not only are these documented harmful substances, but the pharmaceutical manufacturers admit that "Fluzone has not been evaluated for carcinogenic or mutagenic potential, or the impairment of fertility. And that "animal reproductive studies have not been conducted: it is also not known whether Fluzone can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman or can affect reproductive capacity." *information found on manufacturer's package insert.

Allow me to add, that as a nurse, I am aware of the benefits of certain medications and treatments. Professionally, and ethically, I do not attempt to impose my beliefs on patients or co-workers. When I recently had a tick bite resulting in documented infection, I availed myself to

medical evaluation and treatment with a prescribed antibiotic. However, as an educated and informed consumer, I exercise my right to making personal health care choices; whether to use a cholesterol-reducing drug, or work with dietary measures. As a clinic employee and healthcare worker in our country, we are asked to be sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity. We are to respect a patient's right to refuse a blood transfusion or stem cell use, based on their religious or personal beliefs. We are to provide dietary choices based on Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Vegan or other beliefs. And yet as an employee, I am being coerced to receive a vaccination, against my beliefs, or be terminated from employment.

My employer's **Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy** states it has been implemented for the safety and health of its patients that are more vulnerable to communicable diseases and may have a greater risk of adverse complications to such diseases than the general public. To this I reply, that each individual should have the *right* to do their own research and form their own conclusions about safety and efficacy. If a healthcare employee or patient feels "safe" getting a vaccine, and believes it will limit their acquiring the flu or other specified disease, then they should receive the vaccine and feel protected from unvaccinated persons who might harbor or develop symptoms of the disease.

However, knowing that the efficacy rate of the current Fluzone vaccine(as stated in package insert) is 60% for H1N1- with 39% being immune "pre-vaccine", 74% of H3N2- with 34% immunity "pre-vaccine, and 54% for Influenza B, and 41 % immune "pre-vaccine", getting the vaccine in no way affords 100% protection, and I believe the safety hazards outweigh the benefits. Furthermore, I believe that patients are far less likely to catch the flu from clinic employees versus other public places. As a population, medical personnel are educated to the effectiveness of frequent hand washing- the clinic stocks its exam rooms and restrooms with disinfectant soaps and waterless hand sanitizers. We are trained in our professions to cover our coughs and sneezes and disinfect surface areas. As an employee group, we have access to good health insurance and paid-time off benefits, enabling most Clinic employees to be able to stay home when ill. On the other hand, these same "vulnerable patients", will be observed shopping in big department and grocery stores, eating out at restaurants, and attending school athletic events and performances. The staff and customers in retail and fast food establishments are not able to wash hands between customers or after coughing /blowing his nose, and they are less likely to stay home from work when ill, due to having no paid leave, or even at risk of losing their job for failure to come in. Some of these same employers require employee to get a "medical excuse" if they miss a day of work, and without good insurance, the individual cannot afford to see a medical provider, or loss of wages, so are more likely to go to work when infected.

My employer in central WI has approximately 6,700. Many of these individuals are being forced to sacrifice their right to make medical decisions regarding their personal health care and safety, and are having to subject themselves, unwillingly, to receive the vaccination in order to remain employed and able to provide a home and food for their families. Health Care facilities across the country are adopting the mandatory vaccination policy, which I fear will eventually force many qualified health care providers(who have done their research and have legitimate reasons for abstaining from certain vaccinations) to leave the field, and deter young people entering college to pursue the medical field. This could result in hospitals, clinics and nursing homes being staffed by persons there only because they needed the job.

If mandatory vaccination policies such as these are allowed to occur in the healthcare arena, where **I** am affected, I foresee it will only be the beginning. Soon it will affect **YOU** or your family members, when it spreads over to teachers, daycare providers, bus drivers and beyond. I appeal to the legislators of WI to examine this subject of mandatory vaccination objectively and thoroughly, bearing in mind the precedents that are being set and the future ramifications. My employer's **Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy** clearly states that if an employee has not received the annual influenza vaccine, or obtained a medical and/or religious exemption by 12/1/13, terminations will be initiated started 12/9/13. I, and others like me, could join the ranks of unemployed in less than 30 days.

Respectfully submitted,
XXXXXX, RN
(name withheld to protect my employment)

FROM A PRIOR EMAIL THIS PERSON SENT on 11/11/13:

Thank you for your interest in this issue. It is unlikely that I will be able to attend the hearing, as much as I would like to be there to speak for myself and other co-workers at XXXXX Clinic who are facing termination if not receiving a flu shot. (I am scheduled to work actually, and short of having a feigned illness, doubt I could get the day off) I plan to send you a "testimony" to present on my behalf- which I will compose and send later this evening, (when not at work)....I also have the clinic "policy" that I would like to fax to you, if you could provide a FAX number.

MANY of the clinic's 6,700 are being forced to receive a vaccination against their beliefs, because they NEED to retain their jobs. I plan to submit a Religious Accommodation appeal, but do not know if it will be granted. If not, I am prepared to take early retirement, as I have the luxury of having turned 60 this past May and could access my 401 K if I have to. However, I had planned to continue working as a nurse for another 4-5 years. On behalf of the many co-workers who are under this age bracket, I hope that Wisconsin legislators will be pioneers in taking a stand to protect individual freedoms.

Attachments
from →
Same
person next
3 pgs

Email sent 8/30/13 from Employee Health Director

On August 13, the XXXXX Clinic Board approved changes to the Immunization of Clinic Worker policy

The biggest change will be that all employees will be required to receive the seasonal influenza vaccination prior to December 1 of the flu season or have a validated medical or religious exception to the vaccination. (Note: the link in the policy for the religious accommodation is currently not working. This document is attached)

Under the previous Seasonal Influenza Policy, "Reasons of conscience" was an allowable reason for not getting vaccinated, this has been eliminated and only Medical or Religious reasons for not being vaccinated will be considered.

Other changes include:

Adding Hepatitis B vaccination as a condition of employment (current and new hires)

Adding in other vaccine preventable diseases based on the risk of exposure at work.

The changes apply to all XXXXX Clinic employees, including those that do not work in a medical facility or work outside of the XXXXX Clinic system.

A question and answer sheet, the request for medical exception, and the religious accommodation request are attached to this e-mail.

Questions not addressed in the attached can be directed to me.

We anticipate that we will be starting the seasonal influenza program hopefully by next week. Most workers in Clinic facilities should be able to receive their vaccination in the department they work. Employee Health will be sending out more information on this shortly.

We do ask that employees that need a medical exemption or religious accommodation get these requests in as soon as possible so that they can be reviewed and processed. The December 1 deadline for vaccination or approved exception will not be extended for requests filed at the last moment.

Manager, Employee Health and Safety

MEMO Email dated 11/6/13

TO: XXXXX Clinic Physicians and Staff
FROM: Medical CEO, MD
RE: Influenza Vaccination

In August, the Clinic Board of Directors voted to increase our efforts to provide a safe environment for our patients, employees and staff by requiring that all employees and staff be vaccinated for influenza by December 1, 2013 unless exempted for medical or religious reasons as detailed in the policy.

After two months we have made very good progress, and a large number of our employees and staff have received the vaccination. We have a month left to complete the vaccination prior to the December 1st deadline. Marshfield Clinic is committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for our patients and our staff and the Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy is being implemented to assist with this commitment. Employees that are not in compliance with the policy by December 1 will be subject to the disciplinary action per the policy.

Thank you to those who have already received the vaccination and I ask those that have not done so to work with the Employee Health and Safety Department to receive your vaccination as soon as possible.

11/6/13 EMAIL FORWARDED , BY Dept manager, to non-compliant staff

Hello,

Please follow up on this ASAP.

Thank you,
MM, RN, BSN, Manager

From: Employee Health and Safety Manger.
Sent: Wednesday, November 06, 2013 4:44 PM
To: MM(my dep mgr)
Subject: Flu Vaccination
Importance: High

As of Nov 1, 2013, Employee Health does not have documentation that the following employees/staff have received the influenza vaccination or have filed a religious or medical exemption. The policy deadline for vaccination or having on file a medical or religious exemption is December 1.

The following time frame will be used relating to this policy for salaried and hourly employees.

Nov 1. Managers notified of all employees/staff that we do not have documentation of policy compliance on

Nov 15. E-mail to employee and manager noting that they are still not in compliance, with a reminder that the deadline is Dec. 1. This letter will constitute the first notification letter under the disciplinary section of the Clinic Worker Immunization Policy.

Nov. 22. E-mail to employee and manager. This notification will constitute the second notification that the employee is still not in compliance per the disciplinary section of the policy. This e-mail will notify the employee that they are still not in compliance and that failure to be in compliance by Dec 1 **will result in suspension from work on Monday Dec 2.**

If the employee is not in compliance during the week of December 2, **termination will be initiated starting on Dec 9.**

Providers will have the same time frame but failure to be in compliance with the policy will be handled by the provider disciplinary process.

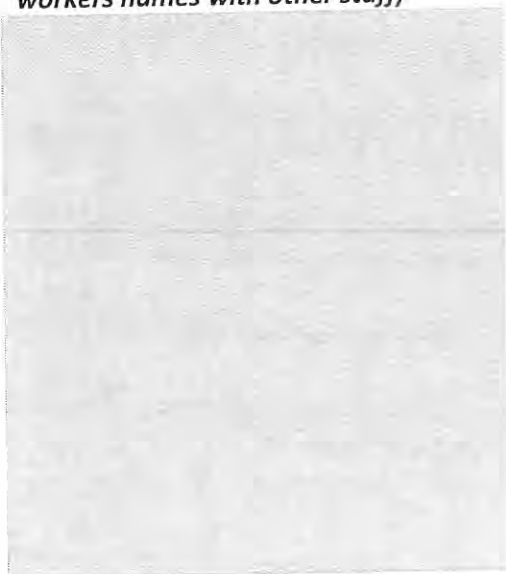
Please review the following list and discuss the requirements of the policy with each employee. Let Employee Health know if the employee is on medical leave and will not be back to work prior to December 1 (please list if you know approximately when the employee will return).

If the employee reports they received the vaccination from their provider, we do not have documentation of that and the employee needs to provide this (they can print their vaccination information from the MY CLINIC portal online. We only need the flu information)

Employees can contact Employee Health to arrange to get the vaccination, or if you have a number of employees that need the vaccination, you can also request another visit to your department by employee health staff to provide the vaccinations. We can also assist with evening or night employees.

If the employee is not working on a Clinic campus, have them contact their area employee health nurse to arrange the vaccination.

(I have omitted names to protect HIPAA- but original mail forwarded to us all, shared co-workers names with other staff)



Manager, Employee Health and Safety

Immunization of Clinic Workers

1) SCOPE

System Wide

2) DEFINITIONS & EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS

- a) **Animal care worker:** Any employee whose job exposes them to live animals or infectious body parts of animals.
- b) **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Declared Outbreak:** Outbreak of a disease that is officially recognized or documented by the CDC.
- c) **Community Outreach Employee:** Personnel that have direct contact with people in the community (i.e. Youth Net program, Americorps program, etc.)
- d) **Contracted Worker:** Any person that is hired through an outside agency. This includes Locum providers that are not directly contracted by the Clinic.
- e) **Employee:** All personnel who are paid by [REDACTED]. This includes hourly/salaried workers, providers, and providers that are directly contracted by Marshfield Clinic.
- f) **Free of Charge:** Vaccinations given by, or at the direction of Employee Health and Safety to employees will be without any charge to the employee.
- g) **Immunity:** Adequate levels of antibodies in a person's blood system thought to protect against the development of a disease.
- h) **[REDACTED] Facilities:** Buildings owned, rented, leased or used by [REDACTED].
- i) **MMR:** Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine. This vaccine is currently only available as a single vaccination with all three vaccines in it.
- j) **Non-responder:** A person who has been vaccinated with the recommended vaccine at recommended doses and intervals for a disease, but does not develop a documented immune response to the disease.
- k) **Non-Seasonal Influenza:** Influenza not a part of the CDC identified strains of influenza developed for the annual influenza vaccine and virulent enough that a special vaccine has been developed for it.
- l) **Seasonal Influenza:** Influenza strains that are identified by the CDC to be included in the annual influenza vaccine.
- m) **Serologic Testing:** A laboratory study that documents the presence or absence of immune system activity associated with the specific disease.

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- n) **Significant Blood Exposure:** An exposure to blood or other infectious body fluids that would be of a nature as to expose the employee to potential bloodborne pathogens.
- o) **Student:** For the purpose of this policy, a student is a person working at the Clinic as part of an educational program or for the purpose of learning. This includes persons in formal education programs and those shadowing health care providers.
- p) **Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap):** The current vaccine for Pertussis available in the U.S.
- q) **Unfixed Tissues:** Tissue that has not been processed with formalin, alcohol or other chemicals that would render a disease non-infectious.
- r) **Unprotected Exposure:** Exposure to a person with an active disease where appropriate precautions such as mask, respirator, eye protection, skin protection, were not used.
- s) **Varicella:** Chicken Pox
- t) **Varicella Zoster:** Shingles
- u) **Worker:** A person that works for, or in [REDACTED] facilities. Worker would include sales or technical personnel that have contact with clinic patients or staff within the Clinic facilities. Worker does not include persons employed by another company that are working on a short term basis and do not have patient or staff contact (i.e. construction workers working after normal clinic hours.)

3) POLICY BODY

The purpose and intent of this policy is to define the immunization standards that will be used by Marshfield Clinic for persons working for [REDACTED] or in [REDACTED] facilities.

- a) Evidence of Immunity
 - i) **Employees:** [REDACTED] requires that all employees of [REDACTED] have positive serologic evidence of immunity on file, or be documented as non-responders for:
 - (1) Measles
 - (2) Mumps
 - (3) Rubella
 - (4) Varicella
 - (5) Hepatitis B
 - ii) **Veterinarians and veterinary workers:**
 - (1) Veterinarians and veterinary workers with exposure to unfixed tissues that have the potential of carrying rabies are required to have serology testing for rabies vaccine antibodies every two years.

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b) Required Immunizations

i) All Employees

- (1) **Vaccination:** All employees, including new hires that do not have a positive titer for the diseases listed under 3.a.i) are required to be vaccinated for that disease as a condition of employment.
 - (a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will provide all required vaccinations free of charge.
- (2) **Tdap:** A documented vaccination against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap), given since 2006, is required for all new hires and all employees.
 - (a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will provide Tdap vaccination free of charge for all employees that have not had the vaccination.
- (3) **Influenza:** Documentation of seasonal Influenza vaccination for all workers is required annually prior to December 1 of each year. All persons covered by this policy that start work between December 1 and the end of the influenza season will be required to be vaccinated, or provide documentation of being vaccinated, with the current year's flu vaccine.
 - (a) Influenza vaccinations will be made available to all employees at no charge. Arrangements will also be made to reimburse the cost of influenza vaccination for employees that are not provided access for a free vaccination through the Employee Health Vaccination Process.

ii) Lab Employees

- (1) **Typhoid:** Laboratory personnel identified by lab administration of being at risk of exposure to Salmonella Typhi from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination for typhoid within the last 5 years. Employees without documentation of current vaccination will be vaccinated with the Typhoid vaccine free of charge.
 - (a) Booster Typhoid vaccinations will be provided free of charge every 5 years.
- (2) **Meningococcal:** Laboratory personnel identified by lab administration of being at risk of exposure to Neisseria meningitides from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination with the meningococcal vaccine. Employees without documentation of current vaccination will be vaccinated with the appropriate meningococcal vaccine for their age free of charge.
 - (a) Booster Meningococcal vaccination will be provided free of charge every 5 years.

iii) Veterinarians and veterinary workers

- (1) **Rabies:** Veterinarians and other veterinary workers identified by lab administration as being at risk of exposure to Rabies from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination for rabies within the last 2 years. Workers with an identified potential for exposure that have not been

vaccinated, or have a rabies titer below 1:5 will be vaccinated/revaccinated free of charge.

iv) Students, Contracted Workers, Community Outreach Workers, and other non-Clinic employees:

(1) Prior to starting work for [redacted] Clinic; all workers who are not employees of [redacted] Clinic but work in a [redacted] Clinic facility or have direct contact with patients or community members, will provide acceptable proof of vaccination according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Immunization of Health Care Personnel Guidelines for:

- (a) Measles
- (b) Mumps
- (c) Rubella
- (d) Varicella
- (e) Hepatitis B
- (f) Tetap

v) Additional Required Immunizations

(1) **CDC Declared Outbreaks of Vaccine Preventable Disease.** In the event a CDC declared outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, [redacted] Clinic will follow the recommendations of the CDC. If vaccination is recommended; all employees of the [redacted] Clinic (or the specific groups of employees identified as needing the vaccination) will be required to be vaccinated against that disease as a condition of employment unless a medical or religious exception is approved.

(2) **Other Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** If research projects or new laboratory tests expose employees to a not listed vaccine preventable disease; employees identified as at risk of exposure will be required to be vaccinated against that disease.

c) Actions

(1) Laboratory Titer Testing

- (a) [redacted] Employee Health and Safety will arrange for laboratory testing to ascertain if evidence of immunity to Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, Hepatitis B and Rabies (if job risk is present) on all new hires or existing employees that do not have titers on file.
- (b) Employees will not be charged for immunity testing obtained through the employee health and safety department.
- (c) The results of immunity testing done by [redacted] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will be provided to the employee and also put into the Employee's Health and Safety record.
- (d) After re-vaccination; Employee Health and Safety will arrange for retesting of the employees titer to document immunity or non-responder status.

(e) If after receiving the required re-vaccination, a healthcare worker still tests negative for immunity, Employee Health and Safety will document the results and date of re-vaccination in the Employee's Health and Safety record and consider the worker as a non-responder. No further testing or vaccination is required once non-responder status has been documented.

d) Precautions for Non-immune Workers

(1) Employees that are found to be non-immune to Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, or that have not been vaccinated against Pertussis, need to avoid exposure to any patient that may have Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (including Zoster), or Pertussis until they have been vaccinated.

(2) Employees that do not respond to vaccination (non-responders) or were recently vaccinated (two to three weeks post vaccination) should also avoid unprotected exposure to patients with Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (including zoster), Pertussis, or Influenza.

(a) If unprotected exposure does occur, notify employee health and safety of the exposure so that appropriate prophylaxis can be initiated.

(3) Employees that are found to be non-immune to Hepatitis B must report any significant blood exposure immediately to the Employee Health and Safety department so that appropriate prophylaxis can be initiated.

e) Masking

(1) Employees and Staff are required to:

(a) Wear a face mask while at work at the first signs of any respiratory illness, and to wear a mask at work throughout the course of any respiratory symptoms. (Mask needs to be on any time the symptomatic employee has contact with patients, employees or others.)

(b) If direct contact with a patient with Measles, or, Varicella (including zoster), cannot be avoided, employees and staff need to use a N95 respirator, gloves, gowns and eye protection. Face masks may be used for contact with Mumps, Rubella, Pertussis or Influenza patients. This includes employees with documented immunity to these diseases.

(c) Employees that are found to not be masking when potentially symptomatic will be subject to disciplinary action.

f) Other Immunizations

(1) Offered Immunizations

(a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will also offer vaccinations to specific employee populations for the following diseases.

(i) **Hepatitis A:** Employees traveling on Clinic business to countries or areas where Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended will be offered the vaccination free of charge.

(ii) **Travelers' Vaccinations:** Employees traveling on Clinic business to countries or areas where vaccinations for diseases not listed in this

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policy are recommended will be offered the vaccinations free of charge.

g) Medical Exemptions.

(1) Documentation of Medical Condition.

- (a) Employees who have a medical condition that would exempt them from vaccination need to provide a written documentation of their medical condition from their health care provider to the Employee Health and Safety Department. (Medical Vaccination Exemption Form)
- (b) Documentation must include the specific medical reason that the employee cannot receive the vaccination.

ii) Review of Medical Condition.

(1) Medical Director of Employee Health and Safety

- (a) The medical director of Employee Health and Safety will review all medical conditions submitted for exemption to vaccination. The medical director will utilize vaccine medical exception recommendations by CDC in determining if the medical condition warrants an exception. In addition; information from the United States Public Health Services (USPHS), vaccine manufacturers, Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), other accepted professional medical and public health organizations, and peer reviewed medical literature, may be used in determining if the medical condition should be granted an exception from vaccination.
- (b) The results of the review by the Medical Director of Employee Health and Safety will be transmitted to the employee. If the employee disagrees with the findings of the review by the Medical Director; the employee can request an additional review by the Clinic Immunization Review Panel.

iii) Clinic Immunization Review Panel (CIRP)

- (1) The CIRP will be comprised of infectious disease, adult/pediatric allergy and other specialties as indicated by the medical condition being evaluated. The Employee Health and Safety medical director will be a non-voting member available for consultation.
- (2) The opinion of the CIRP will be communicated to the employee by Employee Health and Safety.
- (3) If the CIRP finds that immunization is indicated and the employee continues to refuse immunization; the enforcement portion of this policy will be implemented.

h) Religious Accommodations:

- (1) Accommodations for religious reasons for not receiving required vaccinations will be evaluated and if approved, provided by [redacted] Clinic. To request a Religious Accommodation for vaccination, the [redacted] Clinic Religious Accommodation Request Form must be submitted and approved by the Clinic Human Resources department.

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- i) Enforcement
 - (1) Employees (Hourly and Salaried)
 - (a) Clinic Employee Health and Safety will notify all employees when they are found to be lacking in immunity for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella and hepatitis B. Employees will also be notified if we do not have documentation of a Tdap vaccination since 2006, annual influenza vaccination, or other vaccinations/boosters that are required for their job.
 - (b) Employees that do not receive vaccination within one week of initial notification will be sent a second letter along with a copy to their manager.
 - (c) Employees who are not vaccinated within one week of the second notice will be suspended from work until documentation of vaccination is received.
 - (d) After suspension, if compliance with the policy is not met within the week following the suspension; additional disciplinary action up to and including termination will occur.
 - (2) Physicians
 - (a) Physicians not in compliance with this policy will be referred to the Division Medical Director or the Chief Medical Officer.

4) ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- a) References:
 - i) CDC Immunization of Health Care Personnel
 - ii) Recommendations for Rabies Vaccine and Titer Testing
- b) Supporting documents available:
 - i) Religious / Accommodation Request Form.
 - ii) Medical Vaccination Exemption Form

DOCUMENT HISTORY	
Version No.	Revision Description
1.0	New Document
2.0	Updated to require vaccination for vaccine preventable disease such as Hep B, Influenza, meningitis, Typhoid, Rabies, and others as indicated.

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LAST PAGE

13

11/11/13

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Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I am writing you to let you know how strongly I feel about the mandatory flu vaccines that employers of healthcare workers are forcing them to get in order to keep their jobs! I never would have thought that we would see the day when such a thing would be a condition of working or losing your job. I feel for all the workers that have had to make the decision of getting the shot, or losing their job, and hopes of possibly getting another one. I speak from experience for I am having to deal with this very issue, which by the time this week is over I will know if I have my job **or** will be forced to leave the premises and not allowed to return. The **stress** and **anxiety** that comes along with this dilemma is wearing and should not have to be something that anyone should have to deal with. This is America after all! Not some communist country with a dictator telling us what we can and can't do, especially when it comes to our health choices. Employers cannot get away with this! I submitted my religious exemption and was told it was not good enough! I know that they say they are concerned for us the employees and that they care about us, and the patients, but I know that is not the real reason. I'm sure it's all about MONEY! If they cared about us they would respect our wishes as human beings. Lets not lose anymore of our freedoms than we already have!!!

Thank you for all your work and effort on this.

I hope that this bill will pass! Best of luck to all!

Sincerely,
JR

11/11/13

(38)

Dear. Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am very much in favor of the flu vaccine bill being passed , as I do not believe an employer should have a say in what employees should put into their body. I work for a hospital and the arguement is that we need to protect our patients, I do not have direct patient contact, as a matter of fact I work from home. I do not feel these shots are effective or safe. There are a number of things contained in flu vaccines that many people do not know about and some are carcinogens. I have had to wear a mask for the last several years because I did not recieve a flu shot, and was made to feel like an outcast because of my choice not to vaccinate. People would look at me as if I had the plague. I did find it ironic that over the last two years not once was I out sick with the flu, but many of the people who were given the flu vaccine were out sick once if not more than once. To make matters worse many people came in to work sick with coughs, bronchitis, sneezing, fevers, and those people were not asked to wear a mask. I feel this is discriminating and nothing more than big pharma trying to make more money. Nothing would make me happier than getting this bill passed.

PLEASE KEEP MY E-MAIL AND NAME INFO CONFIDENTIAL.

Respectfully,

A concerned voter

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: troyandlynn@charter.net
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 2:56 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB 247

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Rep Thiesfeldt,

I am writing to show my support for the AB 247 bill going to hearing tomorrow. I am unable to attend the hearing but want it known that I firmly believe that as Americans we should have the right to make our own decision as to if we want to receive a vaccine or not.

I've never felt so bullied in the work place until the last two flu seasons. Last year it was, "get the vaccine or you have to wear a mask at all times while at work". Fine, I did that (wore a mask). This year it was mandated to get the vaccine or no pay raise in January, with next year's refusal is job termination.

Myself and several others filed for religious exempt forms, some were granted and others not. But again, you couldn't just say religious exempt you had to write up a form explaining your reasons for it, then go through a 30 minute phone interview with which they collaborated and decided if you were sincere or not about the religious waiver.

When did our country stop following our constitutional rights, and decide its ok for employers to dictate how our lives are run! I know the hospital gets its reimbursement according to what percentage of employees get the flu vaccine. How does that make it right? I understand big business puts money in government and in turn get things to go their way. Enough!

Please do not let money do the talking on this one, we as individual Americans need to be able to decide what is right for each of us.

Thank You for your time,

Lynn Phillips, RN

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: moss-noreply@legis.wisconsin.gov
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 1:44 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Form Results website comments

Form submission results

Date: 11/11/2013 1:44:24 PM

Field Name	Value
Comments	jeremy I oppose being madated to get a flu shot. they are putting army worms and pig kidney in the flu shot now and also their is mercury in it which very bad for our brains. it is designed to dumb us down as a nation..please watch the video Thrive by foster gamble and you will get all the info you need to help you make this decision and pass it along to the other senators...thanks for doing what is right....
Email	countrydoctordetox@gmail.com
Name	Renee waters
Address	747 crestview ln
City_state	fond du lac
Phone	9209228950
FormName	website comments

Message sent from: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/thiesfeldt/Pages/Contact.aspx>

11/11/13

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Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

Today I went to the Fond du Lac County building and got the flu shot there. I do not want the flu shot nor have I ever wanted it. I work at St. Agnes hospital and I have been a good employee for the last 17 years. St. Agnes has now a new policy that mandates that everyone has to get the flu shot. When I immigrated to the US from Germany in 1973 I was excited because of the US being a free country, where people had choices. It doesn't feel like this anymore. The bottom line is that if I do not get the flu shot, I have to wear a mask at work (which feels punitive and is impractical) or I lose my job. Before you get the shot, you have to sign a statement that reads: "I wish to receive the flu vaccine."

This has brought me a lot of stress, because they are asking me to sign something that I do not want. I would like to decide what goes into my body, especially in light of the fact that the flu shot has not been proven to be of any benefit. Since I cannot afford to lose my job, I did comply and got the flu shot at the county and I paid \$ 25 for it. While I still had to sign my name at the county, at least it did not say "I wish to receive the flu shot" .

I would be so thankful if you could vote to make this illegal! Many of my coworkers feel the same way, but are too afraid to make waves out of fear of losing their job.

Sincerely,
Sigrun ColumbiaI

11/11/13

I am a practicing RN in WI, I find it appalling that just because I work in health care I no longer have the right to refuse vaccines. I treat patients every year who have serious reactions to the Influenza vaccine. I have 2 friends who, now have been treated for Gillian Barre Syndrome, one still walks with a cane as a direct result of the Influenza Vaccine. She was an ICU patient for weeks, sent on to a rehab facility for weeks, and still has difficulty walking all related to the Influenza Vaccine. This was last year!! As a patient in a hospital I have the right to refuse to be vaccinated and at my MD's office I can still refuse the injection, but because I work in Health Care if I wish to keep my job I HAVE TO GET THE VACCINE! What happened to my rights?? Will the CDC or my employer pay my bills if I have a reaction to the vaccine? Please give us in Health Care the same right to refuse as the rest of the population!!

XXXXXXXXXX

Regarding Flu Vaccine in the Workplace

Nov. 12, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I work in a long term care rehab facility providing physical therapy to a variety of diagnosis. I have worked in this profession for over 18 years. I maybe have had the normal everyday flu 2 times in my working career. I maybe have missed work due to sickness 5 times during those 18 years. I eat a proper diet and supplement my diet with organic vitamins.

The flu shot has been offered yearly by the company and it is paid for. Each year I had to go through an education process as to why the flu shot is recommended. I have always declined. In the year 2011, the company was again recommending the flu shot. If you chose not to take it, you would be required to wear a mask. Obviously, it is very difficult to communicate with a patient especially ones that are hard of hearing. I chose to get the flu shot that year against my better judgment.

In 2012, the company decided to make it mandatory that all employees get the flu shot. If you chose not to get the flu shot, your employment was terminated.

I ended up taking a different job that does not require the flu shot. I am making less money and it is less hours. I do still work at the prior company at a per diem basis. I just choose to not work during the cold and flu season to avoid taking the flu shot. I miss out on extra wages that I could be earning.

I am also afraid that they will terminate my employment due to not following the companies policies. I know that this has happened to a few of my other coworkers who chose not to get the flu shot.

I chose not to get the flu shot due to the possible side effects, inability for it prevent the flu (only a certain strain which they don't even know what it will be, just a guess), and that I am a healthy active person. My immune system is not compromised by other diseases.

Thank you for your time.
XXXXXXXXXXXX

11/2/13

(47)

Hi Jeremy,

I am working tomorrow so I would like to email you my story to share. And I will need my name confidential because I still work for Agnesian.

It is mandatory at Agnesian Healthcare to have a flu vaccination in order to keep our employment. For the past 2 years I have tried to get exempt for personnel and religious reasons. Only to be turned down for my personnel reasons not even being looked at because they aren't into natural remedies. Also my religious were turned down because my beliefs were from scripture and not from a church. I feel that Christianity comes from the bible and your heart I don't feel you have to frequent a building to have religious beliefs.

But then my story gets even better. Last year after I had the mist I had a bad reaction with heart racing, Palpitations, dizziness with near passing out. And turned this in to workman's comp and they covered me and assumed responsibility until I had to have an expensive procedure to hopefully get my life back. And then they decided they were no longer responsible and made it impossible for me to have them take care of my medical bills as they should have.

I had a catheter ablation done and am on the mend. \$57,000.00 later Not sure if my life will ever be the same.

So I have been through a lot this past year and still going through things. Not sure Agnesian really cares about the health of there employes as much as the money that lines there pockets from having a certain amount of employees immunized.

Hopefully you will be able to help others before it's too late for them.

I am finally exempt this year but only thanks for my Dr standing up for me. And I will have to wear a mask for all of flu season which seems to be more of a punishment because everyone knows that masks aren't effective.

Thank you for standing up for what's right.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Matthews, Meagan

From: Betty Mihlbauer <bmihlbauer@mountcalvarywaukesha.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Shot

I work with the school system ~ in 1993 I was "forced" to get a flu shot by the principal ~ who stated I needed this as I was with children all day long and exposed to all the various illnesses.

I did get my flu shot ~ gave the principal his paper of proof ~ and promptly became sick for the entire winter.

I was very lethargic, feverish and felt tired all of the time.

My doctor told me that the shot does affect people in various ways and unfortunately my body reacted very adversely.

That was the only flu shot I have had in my entire life ~ I'm still with the school system but no longer required to get the flu shot as the principal saw first hand how I reacted to it.

Matthews, Meagan

From: Diane Kollath <mkdollath@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 1:42 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu vaccine

I am one of thousands of nurses who are opposed to the flu vaccine being mandated. I ,unfortunately, now have a chronic disease due to receiving one vaccine. My lungs look as if I have smoked my entire life and I never have. I have COPD due to the vaccine and am now allergic to many things I never had been before. My pulmonologist has said "he can't tell me how many people he see who have the same signs and symptoms of lung disease who were just fine prior to taking the flu vaccine". I realize this is a billion dollar money maker at the expense of our health. I will never be healthy due to this vaccine. It has destroyed my immune system. I have been "grandfathered" in at my place of employment and in the past have had to wear a mask the entire flu season (9 months) due to a doctor's excuse to not receive the vaccine. They will not hire a person who cannot or will not submit to this vaccine. This is not fair as to not having a voice in what is injected in your body. If everyone knew what really was in a flu vaccine. I think alot more people would be objecting. We are told it's "just a dead virus" but has deadly additives. Most of my co-workers do not want the vaccine but do not want to lose their job either. It should be a choice of what is injected in our bodies. We should not lose our jobs. I am not saying where I work but it is a reputable nursing home/rehab center. Sincerely, Diane Kollath

11/12/13

47

Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I would like to thank you and everyone else that is working on AB 247, I greatly appreciate your efforts.

I am currently employed by Marshfield Clinic and I am in fear of losing my job due to the mandated influenza vaccination. If I don't get it by **Dec. 1st** I WILL be terminated unless I have a medical reason or a religious exemption. I have requested a religious exemption and will be questioned by a panel in a couple weeks. I have offered to purchase and wear masks to prevent any undue hardship for the clinic. My patient contact is rare because I work 5pm to 1 am. Rarely are there patients in my area after 5pm and if there are I don't even have any contact with them. I haven't missed a days work due to illness, nor have I come to work sick in the 3 1/2 years of my employment with this clinic. I have never taken the influenza vaccine, many other co-workers have and have come down with the flu.

I have been looking for other employment but can't find anything that compares with my present job and the benefits that it offers for the type of work that I do. My husband is disabled and I carry the health insurance for our family. I CAN'T afford to lose my job. **I NEVER thought I would be put in a position to inject something into my body that I'm totally against!** There are many other employees that have the very same concerns as I do.

I know the effectiveness of this vaccination is only around 50% for the last couple of years according to the CDC web site. I also know that there are risks with some severe consequences like paralysis, neuropathy and severe allergic reactions. It also contains toxins like thimerosal (mercury) and formaldehyde, "in July 1999, the Public Health Service agencies, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and vaccine manufacturers agreed that thimerosal should be reduced or eliminated in vaccines as a precautionary measure." <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/Thimerosal/Index.html> I should never be forced to inject something that only has a 50% chance of protecting me.

PLEASE pass this bill.

Thank you,
XXXXXXXXXXXX

11/12/13

1/2 (48)

Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I received an email from a friend of mine informing me of the meeting Nov. 13 regarding the flu shot vaccination. I will not be able to come to Madison to testify on my behalf what transpired with me regarding the flu shot, but I would appreciate it if you could point it out at the meeting on my behalf.

We were told by our employer that the flu shot would become mandatory this year (2013), and if you did not get an exemption, or did not receive the flu shot, your employment would be terminated. Just a brief update on what took place for me. I chose not to receive the flu shot, but I did turn in a religious exemption, (which was offered along with a medical exemption). I was told my exemption was not approved by Sr. Management, so therefore, according to what we were told, my employment would end. Instead of leaving with "fired" on my record, I chose to retire from my job there. I was employed there for 15 years, did not work with patients, and also was willing to wear a mask during flu season (as stated in the exemption form if it was approved by mgmnt.). I also had never had the flu shot, and never missed any work from being sick. The day before my retirement, Human Resources informed me that they had changed a few things regarding the religious exemption (because two other employees were denied and then chose to sit before a panel and plead their case, and then they were approved). Management now said they finally accepted the fact that there was more to people's faith and what was in people's hearts than what they chose to believe by the exemption form. I chose not to do that because now, along with the denied religious exemption form, a letter from my pastor stating my religious beliefs and what I stood for and how strong I was in my faith, I could turn that in to Human Resources and they would set up an appointment for me to sit before a Personnel committee and plead my case again (and basically beg for my job back). It wasn't worth it to me to have to beg and plead my faith and beliefs, the stress and humiliation I went through, and would go through again, only to possibly be denied again. If they didn't believe or accept what I turned in on the exemption form the first time, what would a letter from my pastor and sitting before a panel, that they chose, make any difference now.

The biggest reason for the push on a mandatory flu shot was because we were told our place of employment had to be at least 95% compliant to receive a kick-back for medicare. Not a good reason to SELL all of your employees out. It is also sad that they had already forced the biggest majority of employees to get the shot before they decided to change the rules. This could possibly have prevented many others from getting something injected in their bodies that they didn't want there in the first place. Several of the employees told me they did not want the shot, but needed their jobs, so was backed in a corner and had to go along with it to save their employment.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony, and we can only hope this can be stopped so people can choose what they want injected in their bodies instead of being told they have to. It is a pretty stiff sentence to lose your job because you don't agree with their choice for you.

If possible, Mr. Thiesfeldt, I would like to remain anonymous on this issue. If you personally would like to email me for more info, that would be good especially if I can be of help in any way to end this battle.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

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Matthews, Meagan

From: kmaurisak@charter.net
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 2:52 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill

11-11-13

Dear Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt,

As of the date of this letter, I am waiting for an answer from my employer as to whether or not I will be able to keep my job. I have put in for a medical exemption to not receive the flu vaccine. I work at a large medical clinic as a housekeeper during the hours of 5pm to 1am (after clinic business hours). The clinic has made it mandatory for all employees to receive yearly flu vaccinations. There are many of us who may lose our jobs, as we either have medical and/or religious beliefs that require us to decline taking these vaccinations. I personally have both reasons, but have requested a medical exemption and have provided my employer with a doctors note and an explanation of my health problem and why I can't take the vaccine. As I said, I have not heard anything back yet, but I have heard that it's very hard to get the exemption. I have a co-worker who had requested a religious exemption with quite a detailed letter of her beliefs, and she was told that she has to appear by teleconference in front of a review board. What an intimidating thing to have to go through! She has to speak in front of a number of doctors/people, telling her beliefs and being questioned, and then having this board decide if her religious beliefs are good enough.

Our employer states that getting this vaccination is for patient safety, but the truth is, that it's really for reimbursement purposes. My understanding is that by 2015, per Obamacare, a certain percentage of employees have to be vaccinated or health care facilities will lose reimbursement on Medicaid due to a point system where they would be fined for non-compliance.

I personally would like to tell you how much stress and worrying this has caused for me, my family and my co-workers. My husband and I have been struggling financially for quite some time and can't even make it paycheck to paycheck. To be threatened with the loss of my job and healthcare insurance is unbelievable to me. My husband's employer, also a healthcare facility, is requiring mandatory vaccines next year and he was told that he would lose his job if he doesn't take the flu vaccine.

I thought this was America. How can a person be forced to inject something into their body that they can't take medically or that is against their religious beliefs? Or maybe, they just don't believe in putting toxic things into their bodies, such as the thimerasol (mercury) that's in most vaccines.

I would like to thank you for fighting for us against these mandatory vaccinations. Please, please help us to keep our jobs and health insurance.

Sincerely,

Kathrine Maurisak
1010 8th St.

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Jeanne Chianese <reign.as.king@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 4:22 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory flu vaccines

Dear Rep. Theisfeldt:

I understand you are considering a bill to stop mandatory flu shots. I am in total agreement with this from a freedom perspective and a research perspective. Here are some of the research facts: First of all, medical research indicates that the efficacy of the influenza vaccine is grossly exaggerated. (1) The British Medical Journal questioned the validity of studies claiming that the vaccine is effective, stating that "evidence from system reviews shows that inactivated vaccines have little to no effect on the effects measured".(2) Further, a 2008 issue of the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine concluded that "significant influenza vaccine effectiveness could not be demonstrated for any season, age, or setting examined".(3) A 2011 study from the Center of Infectious Disease Research Policy at the University of Minnesota showed there was only, at best, a 1.5% effectiveness rate for every 100 vaccinated. Also, the study reported that 97% of those who DO NOT get the vaccine, DO NOT get the flu. (4) Another Cochrane review of multiple studies of over 70,000 healthy adults led by renowned influenza specialist Dr. Tom Jefferson stated that, "reliable evidence on influenza vaccines is thin, but there is widespread manipulation of conclusions and spurious notoriety of the studies". Also, "there is no evidence that they affect complications, such as pneumonia or transmission."(4)

In addition, there is a lack of evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents transmission of the virus. Cochrane researchers in their effort to determine whether vaccinating healthcare workers protects patients found that:

- a) There is no accurate laboratory proven data to determine influenza in healthcare workers.
- b) Studies identified in this publication had a high risk of bias.
- c) The studies found that "vaccinating healthcare workers who look after the elderly in long-term care facilities did not show any effect on the specific outcomes of interest, namely laboratory-proven influenza, pneumonia or deaths from pneumonia."(4)

Dr. Roger Thomas of the University of Calgary, lead author of the paper published in 2010 by the Cochrane Library, said this, "What we were looking for is proof that influenza...is decreased. Didn't find it. We looked for proof that pneumonia is reduced. Didn't find it. We looked for proof deaths from pneumonia are reduced. Didn't find it."(4)

Another exaggeration of the facts is how many people actually die each year from the flu. The Center for Disease Control (CDC), a strong proponent of the vaccine, does not itself believe that influenza is the cause of most pneumonia and influenza related deaths. Their website states, "Only a small proportion of deaths in either of these two categories are estimated to be influenza-related. CDC estimated that only 8.5% of all pneumonia and influenza deaths and only 2.1% of all respiratory and circulatory deaths were influenza-related."(5) In December of 2005, the British Medical Journal

(online) published a report by Peter Doshi, which sorted out the statistics of how many deaths the CDC actually knows died of influenza. "[According to CDC statistics], 'influenza and pneumonia' took 62,034 lives in 2001—61,777 of which were attributable to pneumonia and 257 to flu, and in only 18 cases was the flu virus positively identified." (6) Doshi also showed that from the year 2001, "the CDC actually finds the flu virus in a tiny proportion of people who are estimated to have died from the flu." (6)

Being vaccinated is not without its risks. There is the risk of dangerous and life threatening side effects in addition to the vaccine containing numerous toxic substances. Possible side effects include, but are not limited to, Guillain-Barre syndrome, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy, acute disseminated encephalomyelitis, acute transverse myelitis, optic neuritis, cerebellar ataxia, giant cell arteritis, peripheral facial palsy, seizures, anaphylaxis, neuropathy, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, and more. (4)(7) Depending on the manufacturer, flu shots contain antibiotics, formalin (formaldehyde exposure can cause weakened immune system, neurological damage, and is a suspected carcinogen.(8)(9)), avian proteins/DNA, avian (stealth viruses), a detergent (Triton X-100), hydrocortisone, MSG (excitotoxin), synthetic vitamin E (highly inflammatory), and thimerosal (mercury which can cause nephro and neurological damage). (4)

The hospital I work for requires employees who refuse the flu vaccine to wear masks from March to Nov to prevent the spread of the flu-- more punitive than safety measure, since the data does not support an endangerment of the general population to the flu or that the flu shots are effective, if there were an endangerment. The data I've shown demonstrates that those who get the vaccine have the same chance of spreading the virus as those who don't get it. Further, at healthcare workers should be entitled to the same rights as our patients. That is the right to refuse treatment as well as to expect to be free from all forms of harassment. (10)

My colleagues and I are very distressed over being forced to submit to a vaccine that isn't even effective or being forced to wear a mask for all our pt care which also is ineffective. This has all been done on the basis of misinformation and possibly a means for some to profit financially.

Here is a Bibliography which will lead you to other sources of research on the vaccine. Thank you for your concern in this matter.

1. Cochrane Database syst Rev 2006; 1.
2. BMJ 2006;333:
3. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med 2008 Oct; 162 (10): 943-51.doi 10.1001/arch.pedi.162.10943
4. <http://vran.org/in-the-news/forced-flu-vaccination-of-healthcare-workers-threatens-health-and-liberty/>
5. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm
6. <http://www.infowars.com/bombshell-18-people-died-of-the-flu-not-36000-as-claimed-by-the-cdc/>
7. Package inserts for FluMist and Fluarix
8. http://www.naturalnews.com/037653_vaccine_additives_thimerosal_formaldehyde.html
9. <http://voices.yahoo.com/formaldehyde-vaccines-toxic-substance-poses-threat-1676841.html>

10. <http://www.passionforpatientcare.org/oth/Page.asp?PageID=OTH101065>

11. http://www.columbia-stmarys.org/Vision_Mission_CoreValues

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_Additional research sources concerning the flu vaccine can be found in the article that is #4.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Chianese

reign.as.king@gmail.com

11/11/2013

Dear Representative,

I am sure that by now you have done your best to inform yourself on the influenza vaccine and why so many people are opposed to mandating it for our healthcare workers, so I won't bore you with another letter listing facts and statistics. Instead, I am writing to share my story.

My name is Michelle Pierquet-Hohner. I am 41 years old. Until December of 2007, I worked my entire career in healthcare. For the first 10 years I was employed as a Child Life Specialist at Children's Hospitals. I had an integral role within the care team. My responsibilities included providing emotional, educational, diversional, and developmental support to children to minimize stress of illness and hospitalization, promote optimal growth and development and enhance quality of life.

In 2005, I accepted a new challenging position in which I had the opportunity to create a Patient Navigation program for patients beginning cancer treatment throughout that particular healthcare system. I served as a liaison between patients, families, and healthcare team to ensure above and beyond adequate cancer care and supportive services were provided. I assisted patients in obtaining information on diagnosis, treatment options, insurance and medical assistance. I also worked alongside other community services to provide education and community outreach.

In December of 2007, the hospital I was employed at was strongly encouraging employees and the community to get their flu shot. Like many of the other employees, I believed that this was the most responsible thing to do and so I did.

Approximately a week later, I noticed a strange tingly feeling in my legs and that night I had a difficult time climbing the stairs in my home. I wrote it off as a consequence of wearing fashionable instead of functional shoes. The next day I had difficulty walking. My legs felt very heavy and various co-workers asked me if I was ok. I was a little concerned, but honestly figured it was from working so much and being on my feet for too long. I decided to spend the afternoon working at my desk (thinking I just needed to let my body rest a little.) After an hour or so, I needed to use the restroom and when I tried to stand up, I couldn't. I couldn't feel my toes or legs up to my mid-thigh. I couldn't walk.

I was brought to the ER immediately, where I met with a neurologist who did an initial exam. One of the first questions asked was: Did you receive a flu shot and when? I honestly didn't even think much of it at the time. I underwent a variety of medical tests/procedures. I was told that I had Guillain-Barre Syndrome and that I should call my husband to come from work right away. I explained to them that my husband was working on an important project that evening and wouldn't be available until late. The neurologist then explained to me that I needed to call my husband and any other family right away; that I would likely be sedated and put on a respirator before the end of the night.

Upon my admission as a patient to the hospital (in which I was employed,) our wellness coordinator stopped by my bedside. At first I thought it was a concerned / friendly visit, but when she handed me a copy of the paper I signed prior to receiving this vaccine, I knew that it wasn't a social call. I was honestly confused as at that point I didn't even understand the correlation. It was a while later, when I started to educate myself on the possible dangers of the influenza vaccine, that I was reminded about this strange visit.

I never did need to be put on a respirator - thank God, and I was and am often told that I am one of the lucky ones. I had to spend only a couple of weeks in the hospital. When I was able to move short distances with a walker, I was discharged home for outpatient physical rehabilitation. It was a long painful recovery and a lot of it is forgotten due to the medication they had me on for severe nerve pain. I am going on seven years now and I wish I could say it is all behind me, but I don't think it ever will be. I am able to walk without assistance (most days,) however I often struggle with painful neuropathy in my feet and legs and I fatigue very easily. Not convenient at all to a mother of two active little boys.

Not only has this illness affected me physically / emotionally, it has affected me career wise. I loved my career in healthcare. I was dedicated and passionate about helping individuals and families within the system. I was considered a valuable employee. However, the pressure to receive an influenza vaccine has discouraged me to work in healthcare. It could quite possibly kill me. I was fortunate to secure a position at a small non-profit. While this is also rewarding, my income is approximately half of what I made in the hospital setting, qualifying me to purchase health benefits for my children through BadgerCare.

I ask if you haven't yet, to please do your research on the influenza vaccine. Unfortunately, I didn't know about the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program until three years after my diagnosis with Guillain-Barre. Three years being the cut-off to apply for any type of compensation. I was not surprised to read recently that as of July of 2012, there have been more than 84,000 reports of reactions, hospitalizations, injuries, and death following influenza vaccinations reported to the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System, including over a 1000 related deaths and over 1600 cases of Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

With all this said, I am simply asking you to **PLEASE SUPPORT Assembly Bill 247.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmly,

Michelle L. Pierquet-Hohner
1345 Franco Court
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 412-8141
M_pierquet@hotmail.com

To: Rep. Thiesfeldt

Cc: Rep. Swearingen & Sen. Tiffany

Re: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill (AB247)

I, Timothy C. Stolar of Rhinelander, WI submit this testimony in favor of the Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill, AB247.

Let me first begin by stating that I am not a doctor, nurse, medical assistant, CNA, or etc. I am however, a Sr. Project Engineer with a company in Rhinelander, WI. Being an engineer, I do not work full time in hospitals or clinics, so it is likely that initially it may seem I have no involvement within the medical field.

However, I believe in serving my community and country much like my Grandfather and Father have done before me, as well as setting a good example for my children. As such, for the past four years I have been a Volunteer EMT-B with the Township of Sugar Camp, in Oneida County. As a volunteer, I need to make myself available to respond to emergencies at all times of the day and night, and it is during medical emergencies that I do come into contact with patients and enter hospitals. Many times it is in the middle of the night, and many times I have to leave my family during family activities to be able to respond.

As an EMT-B, I am paid by the Township of Sugar Camp for my "on call" time. However when responding to a call, I become an employee of St. Mary's Hospital of Rhinelander, WI. It was not until about one year ago that I have been required to take the influenza vaccination. To this date, I have refused this vaccination. I am now under the threat of not receiving my yearly pay raise, and if I do not receive the vaccination next year, my Volunteer position will be terminated.

It has been my experience that when I have received the vaccination, I have become very sick following the injection, and was often sick throughout the winter months. I have only received it twice in my life, and each time I was very sick. I have seen this happen to others as well.

My Wife is a Registered Nurse, so she has routine contact with patients on a daily basis. For her, the influenza vaccine causes similar symptoms to her as it does to me. Last year my Wife had accepted a new position with a local medical group. Doing the right thing, she gave her four week notice to her old employer. One week prior to her starting her new position, she was required to receive the influenza vaccine. This was never a pre-employment requirement. She refused this vaccine and her offer was revoked. There was no justification, and since then she has not been considered for another position within that facility. Because she had given her notice to her former employer, and three weeks had passed, she was now out of a job. Losing that income was very detrimental to the financial health of our household and to the local economy in general.

However, the bigger issue is not I getting sick, my Wife losing a job, or etc. The issue is the attack on our personal rights and individual liberties. Forcing any employee, volunteer, or contractor to receive a vaccination or otherwise hold them hostage over pay or cause them to lose their job is unethical. It is a direct attack against our Fourth Amendment rights to be secure in our persons against unreasonable searches and seizures. While many may consider the vaccination not a search and seizure, it is certainly a seizure if employment or payment is revoked if one refuses.

I believe in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. I teach them to my children, and tell my children on a daily basis that these documents are the supreme law of the land. That no one can go against what these documents say. And any change to them simply removes our freedoms as American citizens under God. As such, I also teach them to fight any attack on them.

So, if refusal of a vaccination that is not 100% effective means I will no longer be able to be a Volunteer EMT-B and serve the people in my community at their time of need, then I guess that is the case. Instead I will serve my country and community by fighting attacks on our rights and liberties.

I urge all elected officials to protect our rights as American citizens and pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Stolar
6207 Pine Lake Rd.
Rhineland, WI 54501

715-550-1225 (cell)
715-365-0517 (work)

When did the signage in doctors' offices change from "The number one way to avoid the flu is to wash your hands," to "The number one way to avoid the flu is to get the flu shot?" Since when is injecting ourselves with a large dose of toxins, which lowers our immune system for a few weeks, the way to avoid being sick? **Does anyone else even realize that the ingredients in flu shots are known neurotoxins?**

If you look through the flu information on the CDC (Center for Disease Control) website, and use a bit of logic and critical thinking, you can piece the following together in an order that leaves many questions:

CDC does not know exactly how many people die from seasonal flu each year. There are several reasons for this. First, states are not required to report individual seasonal flu cases or deaths of people older than 18 years of age to CDC. Second, seasonal influenza is infrequently listed on death certificates of people who die from flu-related complications. Third, many seasonal flu-related deaths occur one or two weeks after a person's initial infection, either because the person may develop a secondary bacterial co-infection (such as bacterial pneumonia) or because seasonal influenza can aggravate an existing chronic illness (such as congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Also, most people who die from seasonal flu-related complications are not tested for flu, or they seek medical care later in their illness when seasonal influenza can no longer be detected from respiratory samples. Sensitive influenza tests are only likely to detect influenza if performed within a week after onset of illness. In addition, some commonly used tests to diagnose influenza in clinical settings are not highly sensitive and can provide false negative results (i.e. they misdiagnose flu illness as not being flu.) (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm)

A number of flu tests are available to detect influenza viruses. The most common are called "rapid influenza diagnostic tests." These tests can provide results in 30 minutes or less. Unfortunately, the ability of these tests to detect the flu can vary greatly. Therefore, you could still have the flu, even though your rapid test result is negative. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/testing.htm>)

CDC estimates that from the 1976-1977 season to the 2006-2007 flu season, flu-associated deaths ranged from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm)

(Your provider will) Not necessarily (test you for the flu if you have flu-like symptoms). Most people with flu symptoms do not require testing because the test results usually do not change how you are treated. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/testing.htm>)

Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult (or even impossible) to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can be carried out, when needed to tell if a person has the flu. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>)

You may be exposed to a flu virus that is not included in the seasonal flu vaccine. There are many different flu viruses that circulate every year. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pastseasons/1213season.htm>)

Unfortunately, some people can become infected with a flu virus the flu vaccine is designed to protect against despite getting vaccinated. Protection provided by flu vaccination can vary widely based in part on health and age factors of the person getting vaccinated. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pastseasons/1213season.htm>)

In addition to the flu virus, several other respiratory viruses also can circulate during the flu season and can cause symptoms and illness similar to those seen with flu infection. These non-flu viruses include rhinovirus (one cause of

Stephanie Jegen, Milwaukee WI

the "common cold") and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which is the most common cause of severe respiratory illness in young children as well as a leading cause of death from respiratory illness in those aged 65 years and older. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/other.htm>)

To paraphrase the CDC: We do not know how many people die from the flu each year. The very large range estimate is somewhere between 3,000 and 49,000 people, over the course of 30 flu seasons. It does not change a physician's course of treatment whether you actually have the flu or not so usually diagnostic testing is not done, plus, the rapid test is very unreliable. Cold and flu symptoms are difficult "or even impossible" to tell the difference between based on symptoms alone, so we get our numbers using mathematical statistical methods, not facts. Also, you can still get the flu even if you were vaccinated, or you can get a different strain of the flu that is not included in that specific flu season's vaccine.

So basically, they have no idea how many people die from the flu each year. Since cold and flu have symptoms that are nearly impossible to tell apart, and since specific diagnostic testing is rarely done, how do they know who actually has, or dies from the flu? They only guess which strains will be active each flu season and base the vaccines on that guess.

It should be every person's individual decision which vaccines they subject their body to. A lot of thought goes into this for each person. Maybe a family knows that since they travel overseas a lot, they choose to have their children vaccinated for diseases that they are more likely to come in contact with in different countries. To that family, it is necessary. A different family, who has a parent who stays home with the young children who have been breastfed for at least the first 1-2 years of life and who live in a more rural setting might decide that vaccinating their children is not essential until a little later in their childhood when their bodies are more able to process the toxins that come along with the immunity. Since the flu shot is seasonal it should be a person's individual decision whether they want a flu shot that particular year. A build-up of heavy metals in our systems is real and dangerous. It should be a woman's decision if she would like to forgo the flu shot in a year when she is worried about carrying her new pregnancy to term, and maybe the next year when she has an infant at home, she will decide that is the year she will get the flu shot.

If you would open an insert packet from a flu shot vaccine you would find some version of the following sentence under section 8 regarding pregnancy: "There are, however, no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Because animal reproductive studies are not always predictive of human response, (vaccination brand name) should be given to pregnant woman only if clearly needed." A woman's pregnancy status in the early part of her pregnancy is no business of her employer. How is she supposed to protect her child if she is forced to either get a flu vaccine or be terminated from her job?

In the medical profession, flu mandates or flu shots as 'terms of employment' have employers offering the guilt that "we must do what is best for our patients." This argument folds in on itself when we know that we can still transmit the flu virus even if we are vaccinated. The CDC says that "People with flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away. Most experts think that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a person might also get

flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.” (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm>) So if someone spreads the droplets into the air, and go talk to someone else in close proximity I have now potentially spread the flu virus.

Individuals who get the flu shot might in fact have a false sense of security regarding their immunity to the flu that year. They might stop doing, or decrease doing, all the dozens of other things that prevent the spread of the flu. Those things include, but are not limited to:

- 1) WASH YOUR HANDS.
- 2) Take a high quality multi-vitamin every day.
- 3) Consume probiotics daily.
- 4) Take a Vitamin D supplement every day.
- 5) Use a high-quality air filter in your home to filter out bacteria and mold spores.
- 6) Get regular exercise to boost your circulation and immune system.
- 7) Use therapeutic-grade essential oils every day! These were the medicines that cured illness and disease before convention chemical medications came on the market. In most cases they work better than pills because they are natural and have no side-effects.
- 8) Minimize exposure to immune-damaging chemicals in our modern-societies everyday products. Examples include: cosmetics, anything with fragrance added, and cleaning products. Most contain chemicals that are carcinogenic.
- 9) Avoid processed foods.
- 10) Eat only organically grown, whole foods.
- 11) Stay hydrated.
- 12) Avoid refined sugar which lowers your immune system.
- 13) Add high quality Omega-3's to your diet.
- 14) Get enough sleep.
- 15) Reduce your stress whenever possible.
- 16) Eat local, raw honey.
- 17) Eat more antioxidants like beta-carotene.
- 18) Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- 19) Cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow or into a tissue.
- 20) Stay away from sick people.

If the flu shot worked so well, everyone would want to do it. Companies would put out the word that they are having flu clinics and everyone would jump on board because it was so great. Instead, people have reservations that cannot be ignored. It seems very unnatural to inject ourselves with things that are considered, by the world, as neurotoxic, meaning toxic to our nervous system. Sure there are times when we must do things that we do not want to for the benefit of the outcome. But the flu shot is only, on average, 50% effective and contains harmful toxins. It should absolutely be a personal decision if the benefits outweigh the risks. Americans do risk assessments every day. We do not need employers determining what we decide or what we put into our bodies. Sometimes the benefit will outweigh the risk for an individual; however, an employer casting a universal blanket saying they know what is best is irresponsible.

Stephanie Jegen, Milwaukee WI

We are listening to the sales pitch from flu vaccine manufacturers about how great the flu shot is. Most Americans do not realize that those manufacturers are exempt, by law, from lawsuits regarding the safety of their products. If their products are so great, why do they need legal exemptions?
(<http://www.know-vaccines.org/?p=1106>)

It seems that we all want the short-term answers for everything. Don't want the flu? Get a shot. Don't want high blood pressure? Take a pill. There are other ways to solve these problems but no one seems to want to put in the daily work of doing it the natural way (refer to those points listed above). Injection inserts are filled with tiny print containing all the side effects that any given medication can have. Those are much too frequently overlooked and we tend to get another pill to cure the side effects of the first pill and so on and so forth. We forget that our bodies were designed to fight viruses and bacteria and give us natural immunity.

Again, vaccines have their place, but individual rights to make decisions are going out the window. You could reply, "Well you can get a different job," but where will we go when every work place requires a flu shot or any number of other things that someone in an offices somewhere comes up with 'for the good of everyone.' Could we take away the jobs of thousands of people who went to school and have degrees in the medical field (that is where this is currently a large issue) because a company decided they wanted to implement policies? Large corporations and insurance companies knowing what is best for us, instead of us making informed and educated decisions on our own, is a slippery slope. When do they start making more and more decisions for us? Since when do I not have a say as to anything that is injected into my body?

It is very hard for me to justify putting toxins into my body, on a yearly basis, for someone else's benefit. It can be argued that "top medical professionals say it's necessary to get vaccinated." To that I would argue back that bottle after bottle of sunscreen has labels that say "Skin Cancer Foundation recommended," but they fail to mention that the number one active ingredient in over 90% of sunscreens on the market is Oxybenzone which is carcinogenic, meaning it causes cancer. It does so by creating free radicals in the body which damage DNA. So the Skin Cancer Foundation thinks this product is a great way to avoid skin cancer, but they do not mind you getting any number of other cancers. You can make your clothes smell great by using a dryer sheet. They will smell great, but you are also dosing yourself with another carcinogen. Conventional doctors treat cancer with radiation and chemotherapy which are both carcinogenic. Again we are at the risk-benefit junction.

Only I know what is best for my body and for my children's bodies as long as they are under my care. No one should be able to make that decision for me at the risk of losing my livelihood.

11/12/13

Feel free to use my name, I don't care. I'm not sure what you mean by written testimony. I'll give you all the facts I have.

I work for the Marshfield Clinic in central Wisconsin, in the past we have been allowed to submit a reason of conscious for not getting the flu shot. This year they have taken away the reason of conscious and only allow a Medical exemption or a religious exemption. They have written a new policy which states this and in addition it states that we have until December 1st to comply with the policy. First we will get a warning (my manager has already been notified once that I am not in compliance along with about 5 other people in the same department), we then are suspended on Dec 2nd and termination follows on December 9th if we still do not have the vaccine. IF we choose to submit a medical reason from our physician a review board will determine if it is acceptable or not. For the religious reason we have to meet with a Human Resources person, along with one of the clinic's attorneys, and the head of the employee health program and one other person attends (which I can't remember there position at the clinic), the four of them will interview you and then decide if you can use the religious reason. There are a number of people at the clinic who are opposed to the vaccine. Many of them do not know about this bill, the only reason I found out about it was because I contacted a lawyer that deals with employment issues. Matthew Yde from Wausau was the lawyer and he told me about this bill. I then informed whoever I could about it. I hope this information helps and is what you were looking for. Denise Kann

11/12/13

Please get this bill passed! My employer is requiring all employees to get this flu vaccine! If we don't we will be terminated. We have until Dec 9th to comply or that will be our last day. Several people from the Marshfield Clinic are against getting this vaccine and several have contacted you (which is how I got the information on the public hearing tomorrow at 1:00). We can fill out a religious exemption but have to "face" a board of 4 from Human Resources who will decide if we qualify...
Thank you. Denise Kann

11/12/13

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I receive the email for the hearing to fight against the mandatory influenza vaccine for healthcare workers. I will not be able to attend this hearing but I am definitely against the mandatory influenza vaccine as numerous health care workers I do work with are too. we feel our health rights are taken away from us. last year numerous patients who received the influenza vaccine still contracted the influenza virus. serious side effects can occur from receiving this vaccine and yet some hospitals mandate wearing a mask when not receiving the influenza vaccine. this is degrading and exposes that individual's health problems to all patients and staff that see this person wearing a mask..... they will question this person and now this person will need to explain their health problems in order for that patient or staff members to understand why they could not receive the influenza vaccine..... this is a complete violation of that healthcare workers health rights and privacy..... you may use this email at the hearing.... I would prefer my name not to be used but I am a registered nurse who is currently working and has an allergy to the flu vaccine. at this point my clinic does not mandate a mask but I fear it is the future as numerous other hospitals have made their staff abide to. I love my job and I love patient care. it is not my fault I'm allergic to the vaccine and numerous other medications. I am still able to function and do my job and take vitamins to support my health. there is no proof this flu vaccine works. so why take away healthy nurses from their jobs when this vaccine could injure them for life and who will help those that have a bad reaction and need medical help the rest of their lives?

11/12/13

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I work at a hospital that put into policy that the flu shot is mandatory or we lose our job. If you CAN get an exemption, you have to wear a mask from day 1 that the administration decides it is flu season until they decide flu season is over. One of the nurses, shortly after receiving her flu shot, was paralyzed from waist down and is still in a brief for she has not control, and she has neurological damage. We are told that we can make the patients sick if we don't get the shot. People come to the hospital because they are already sick. I have never received the flu shot and never have I got the flu. This is so unfair, for I do everything in favor of good health naturally. I found it strange that a home for the elderly was shut down a couple of times because so many residents were sick with the flu. They all got their shots. What does this tell you?

Dr. James Howestine wrote that Dr. James R. Shannon, former director of the National Institute of Health declared "The only safe vaccine is the one that is never used." Vaccines are profitable for the drug companies and legislation in the US exempts lawsuits against the Pharmaceutical firms in the event of adverse reactions to vaccines.

Walene James, author of Immunization: The Reality Behind the Myth, states that the full inflammatory response is necessary to create real immunity. There is valid reason to think that not only are vaccines worthless in preventing disease, they are counterproductive because they injure the immune system permitting cancer and auto immune diseases. Vaccines contain many toxic substances that are needed to prevent the vaccines from becoming infected or to improve the performance of the vaccine. Among them are mercury, formaldehyde and aluminum. Aluminum and mercury play an important role in the etiology of alzheimer's disease.

Once a vaccine is mandated, the vaccine manufacturer is no longer liable for adverse reactions. There is NO PROOF that vaccines work and they are never studied for safety before release. It is invading our rights to make a decision for ourselves.

Thank you.

Please do not mention my name for there was talk that many of our doctors were told that if they went to or talked of their feelings against the flu shot that they no longer have a job. I really appreciate what you are doing. I pray our voices will be heard.

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Matthews, Meagan

From: btulgren@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 7:48 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandated Vaccine

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt, I am righting you to beg you to please be strong and fight for our right to decide on weather or not to vaccinate. I never get vaccinated and had to this year because there was no choice. My rights were sold for government money, you see if our Hospital I am employed at is not at 90% compliant with flu vaccinations we loose funding for Medicare. I am not for sale! I have been injured because of the vaccine. I was vaccinated October 2nd and have not been the same since. I have constant pain in my arm and neck, have had to go to the DR, Chiropractor, and been on pretizone to try to get it settled down, something I should never have had to go threw. I have the right to choose and there is no Doctor, or Priest or Pastor that should have more authority over what's best for my body or give me permission to have a waiver to not be forced to have it. Freedom for our Nation hasnt been fought and died for only to start slowly loosing our rights because there are some who think they can make better decisions than I can for my own body. Have you ever noticed how natural medicine doctor, and chiropractors are against this.... Thee people who do not wright out prescription and not in bed with the pharmaceutical and drug companies, as well as the government. Its all a sham to make the government more in control of us and the power to make our own decisions for our health. Please hear my voice and fight for me and so many others. There are so many that feel this way and don't think anyone will listen. Please fight for our right to choose!! Thanks you Rebecca Tulgren btulgren@yahoo.com Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Philip Peckham <ppmp1969@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 5:46 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Employer mandates

To Whom it May Concern:

I have been told that there is going to be a public hearing on employer's requiring employees to participate in programs, such as the flu shot, as terms of employment and I wish to have my voice heard in opposition to this practice. Whether or not I take the flu shot, lose weight or quit smoking should be my decision not my employer's. These are choices that I should be able to make on my own along with my physician. If they can require us to do these things as terms of employment what is next?

Thank you for giving me a voice.

Mary Peckham
1405 Rockridge Rd
Apt 305
Waukesha, Wi 53188
ppeckham@wi.rr.com

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Doreen Sattler <doreeneda_2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 6:51 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Vaccine not require for employment in State of Wisconsin

Dear State Representative,
Please count me in on repealing that flu vaccine be not required for employment in the State of Wisconsin.

I have never gotten the vaccine and do not wish to begin now. My employer, a large healthcare company, is requiring for a condition of employment. It should be a choice, not a requirement. Please please do all in your power to make this illegal for a company to impose on their employees.

Thank you,
Doreen Sattler
Delafield, WI 53018
262-470-6579

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Matthews, Meagan

From: collin/jessie/nicholas martin <cjnmartin79@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 7:43 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Vaccine ~ To be read at the public hearing / Assembly Bill 247

I have been working in the healthcare field for close to three years now. Last winter my company gave every employee an ultimatum. Either get the flu vaccine or consider yourself terminated. I will tell you this. I repeatedly offered to wear a mask during the flu season. I wrote a letter and had a meeting with my administrator. I had a heated debate with the director of nursing. I went to my personal physician seeking a reason why I shouldn't have one. I consulted my pastor about writing a letter which apparently goes against the fourth commandment in his beliefs. I was shot down at every single turn I made.

Now I am asking for YOUR help to repeal this unnecessary and un-American bill that was enacted in the first place. How dare anyone force what I should or should not inject into my body. That decision should be mine and mine alone, no one else's!

There are many reasons why I won't ever get this vaccine. The dangerous concoction of all the disturbingly scary ingredients is a recipe for health related issues in your later years. The biggest one being a ten times greater chance of getting Alzheimer's. The list for health problems is endless. There is a poor success rate in even preventing the flu. There is no single virus that causes the flu and there is no single flu vaccine that protects against all strains. Scientists take an educated "guess" as to what three of over 300 different flu viruses they expect to have the greatest virulence in the upcoming year. When you get the flu vaccine, your body produces antibodies to three of the specific strains of the virus. So you basically have a 3 out of 300 chance (one percent) of being vaccinated for the proper viral strain. Additionally, the viruses are always adapting and may change form by the time you are exposed. There's also the fact that this vaccine has less to do with public health and more to do with corporate profits. The general public is not knowledgeable enough to know the dangers as they take the CDC's word as golden. I could go on and on for my many reasons but these are just to name a few.

Because of my company's ultimatum I originally gave my notice. However, my boss and HR director worked with me to stay on as IHP(in house pool) during non flu season. Because of this I am no longer eligible for a raise nor do I accrue PTO for any summer days off. I've let my coworkers down as for seven and a half months out of the year I'm not allowed to work at all. Not to mention a lack of a paycheck from mid November until the vaccine expires on June 30th. I will then be allowed to come back into the building as of July first and repeat the process again.

I am a darned good worker who wants to work. I love what I do and have that need to contribute to society but this bill hinders me. I am out of work over this very problem and this foolish bill needs to be repealed and now. Do not take my rights, as a US citizen, away from me over a forced vaccine that could make anyone sick. This should be every single person's own right as to what is injected in their body.

If you have any questions at all please, feel free to contact me. I do have some free time on my hands.....for the next seven and a half months.

Jessica Martin
103 Armstrong Ct.
Mukwonago, WI 53149
cjnmartin79@yahoo.com
262-758-3466

11/12/13

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Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I wish I could along with my fellow employees, But some of them may not be at work the next day because our work place is " terminating them" for not accepting them not getting the flu shot. This is so UnAmerican I cannot believe it is happening! We're did our right's go as human beings to say Yes and No. Americans need to stand up for their right's!

Please be a voice for all AMERICANS. To say this is not right. People should have a choice in what they do and put in their bodies and should have no fear in retaliation about losing their jobs for there freedom of speech and act.

Thank You

Sincererly

Patty Roherty- Ellefson

11/12/13

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Hi,

I am sending this message hoping that our voice will be heard and make flu shot as a MANDATORY anymore. I am in favor of the flu shot- only IF that person really needs it. In other words, that person is prone to getting flu more frequent than expected.

At work this year, the upper management required as to have the flu shot as a MANDATORY order. That's the part that I don't agree on because I felt like they held a gun on my head. The option of not taking the shot does not apply to me. But I feel that I should have the freedom for myself. Also, I am fortunate like any other people out there that I have good immune system despite the fact that I have never seen and felt the cold snow before.

Thank you

XXXXXXXXXX, Phlebotomy (ASCP) CM

Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin

Germantown, Laboratory

W168N11237 Western Ave.

Germantown, WI 53022

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Heather Blexrude <h_blexrude@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 9:28 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory flu vaccine discrimination story

Here is my flu vaccine discrimination story.

I used to work at St. Agnes/Agnesian Healthcare almost 3 years ago as a receptionist. I believe in September or October (from what I can remember) of 2011 Agnesian first told their employees about the new mandatory flu vaccine policy by email. We were told we "had" to get the vaccine or were terminated. They did however state they would except religious and medical exemptions upon review. We had until November to have our exemptions in. If you didn't receive the vaccine or have an approved exemption by December 14th (or around that date) you were laid off from your position to "rethink" your decision. If you didn't have the approved exemption or shot by December 31st you were terminated from your position.

Being that this was my first time ever facing this situation I had no idea how to submit my religious exemption. I was freaking out since we had such a short notice to have our exemptions in. We were to submit any supporting documentation to prove your religious beliefs if you were submitting a religious exemption. I filled out a religious exemption form and submitted over 70 pages of (what I thought was) supporting documentation of my religious beliefs. I submitted religious material as well as medical material. I had absolutely no idea how to prove my religious beliefs so I thought the more I submitted, the more it showed my sincerity. Well I thought wrong.

They denied my initial submission stating since I submitted religious AND medical information that my religious beliefs were not sincere and are personal beliefs.

I don't remember the exact timeframe of everything that happened. But around the time I got my first denial I also found out I was pregnant. I was excited yet extremely scared at the same time because I had multiple miscarriages before this baby. I was thinking FINALLY a viable pregnancy but yet now I'm being forced against my religious beliefs to take a vaccine that could potentially cause a miscarriage or lose my job. Since the flu vaccine has risks and never had studies done and states in the insert that its a Category C and its unknown whether it causes harm or not to the fetus, I thought my pregnancy also qualified as a medical exemption. So I called Tammy Pitts, the human resources head person who we were to submit our exemptions to, and told her of my health status change and asked how to submit a medical exemption for this. She told me pregnancy isn't a bona fide medical reason to be exempted from the flu vaccine and that my pregnancy was more of a reason to get the vaccine. I asked her what my other options were if I didn't receive the vaccine and she told me to resign.

I called my PCP Dr. Lisa Weber and asked her about my pregnancy being a medical exemption and she also told me that my pregnancy was more of a reason to receive the flu vaccine. Her exact words were "oh hunny you need to protect yourself and your little one." She told me this as I was crying uncontrollably even though I told her my beliefs against vaccines. I also spoke with my OB physician Dr. Peschong (who is also religiously against the flu vaccine) and she also stated there was nothing she could do for me because the "medical field" says the flu vaccine is safe for pregnant women. She stated she would have loved to help me but couldn't because of how the medical association views flu vaccine as "safe" because it APPEARS to be safe. Even

though there are NO studies proving its safe for pregnant women.

I remember emailing Tammy Pitts again about how upset I was with how they were stating my beliefs weren't sincere and only personal and she told me if there was more documentation to submit to further back my beliefs to do so. So I did. They then denied me again stating I should have submitted that religious material with my first exemption.

Again I don't remember exactly when this happened but sometime in the "waiting" period of waiting to hear response on my exemptions I was harassed by co-workers for having different beliefs regarding vaccines. I was constantly asked why I didn't believe in them and was told I was crazy. I was told "maybe I should go live in a third world country, I would be crawling back to them begging for vaccinations." The one I remember most was when a nurse, Shelly Theisen, was literally yelling at me in front of patients, pointing her finger in my face and just screaming how I was selfish and going to kill everybody. There was a lot more to this but I just remember bits and pieces now that I try to forget about my horrible experience. I remember going to my Supervisor to tell her about it but she was never in her office so I periodically was going to check to see when she was back in her office but then I actually got a call from her to come into her office. So I went into her office and basically she told me I couldn't talk about my religious beliefs and vaccines at work anymore. I told her another receptionist asked me if I heard back from my exemption and I told her no not yet and that's when the nurse started in on me and asking me why I didn't want to get it and that's when she went off on me. That nurse was never reprimanded nor did I ever receive an apology. I on the other hand was told I couldn't talk about my beliefs or vaccines anymore?!?!?! How is that right?

At some point, I remember I went to the CEO and spoke with him, Steve Little. He basically told me "let this be a learning experience" or stepping stone in my life or something like that. He told me it's good that I stand up for what I believe in but still thought my religious beliefs were insincere?!?! Why would I go through all this trouble if I was insincere???

I sought a lawyer who was from out of state who wrote up an opinion letter. In response, Agnesian's lawyer told my lawyer that I apparently told co-workers I didn't have any religious objections to the vaccines and that I simply just didn't want to get it because I was being forced. This obviously was made up by someone. I never stated this. The fact that my supervisor told me I had to stop talking about my religious beliefs proves it right there! There were so many things that Agnesian made up and misconstrued my words to "make me" look insincere.

There are a lot more little details to this story but I tried shortening it up so you can get a basic idea of what I went through.

After sleepless nights, a ton of praying and asking for forgiveness and debating what I was going to do since they wouldn't approve my exemptions, I got the flu vaccine under duress to salvage my job since I was bringing a baby into the world. I couldn't bring a baby into the world with no job especially with how the economy is.

NO ONE should be able to scrutinize someone's beliefs or force a medical procedure that has risks and hold your job above your head. I felt like I was raped and couldn't do anything about it. I tried getting help with showing how sincere I was and no one would listen. Do you know how it feels to feel absolutely helpless? Have you ever had so much fear instilled upon you? I had fear of going against God, losing my job, losing my baby and my own life. I have no idea how I didn't miscarry with all of the emotional stress and damage I went through. Those two or three months were literally hell and the worst days of my life that I have ever

experienced! I am permanently emotionally scarred from that experience.

The following year (last year 2012), I submitted my religious exemption early since they never sent out an email and I wanted to make sure I got it in by the due date. I got it returned to me via US mail with a letter stating they revised the exemption form and that I needed to fill that out and resubmit it. Well, Tammy Pitts attached the SAME exemption form from 2011. They never did attach the new exemption form. It could have been an honest error but with everything that I experienced from the year before I could only assume they did that purposely in hopes that I didn't realize it was the old form and just sign and date it and resubmit it thinking it was the new form. They gave me so many days to have it in or I had to get the flu vaccine. So I think they purposely gave me the old form to delay the process so I wouldn't have time to fight it before the final date to receive the vaccine or lose your job. Or maybe they would have used that to decline me stating I never submitted the correct form on time?! Well luckily I realized they attached the wrong form and went onto their website to print off the correct form and submitted it. Well after I submitted the revised form, they then emailed me and told me I had to complete the form completely. There were a couple questions that I didn't know how to answer so I left them blank. So then I just put N/A and resubmitted it again. Then they emailed me telling me they needed further clarification and that I needed to meet with them. So I went to meet with them and they were sitting there interrogating me, asking me all of these questions about past vaccinations and about other actions that prove my religious beliefs?! Most questions I didn't feel comfortable answering without my lawyer present so that's what I told them and left it at that. Well, finally after a couple weeks I got my religious exemption approved FINALLY. Again, it was tormenting because I was fearing losing my job again and going against God again.

Even though I finally got my religious exemption, I decided to leave Agnesian. I couldn't stand the pressure and harassment any longer. I could NOT go through that EVERY year let alone the harassment and hostile work environment daily.

Please, please, please pass this bill. I know friends and family members that were either fired (exemptions were denied) and/or had serious reactions to the flu vaccine where it damaged them physically for the rest of their lives. No one should have to choose between a medical procedure with risks or lose their jobs!

Heather Blexrude from Fond du Lac (please keep my name anonymous--Thank you!!)

Thank you Jeremy for all your hard work and effort on this! You have touched the lives of many in Wisconsin!!! Stay strong in your fight for us!!

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11-12-2013

Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt,

Hello. My name is Renee M. Klofanda and I was a nurse who worked at Aurora Hospital and personally fought the flu vaccine battle and won! This was not an easy task. The 2011-2012 calendar year was when I was mandated to take the flu vaccine or lose my job (term of employment). Several reasons to why I do not take the flu vaccine are as follows; 1. Not effective 2. Contains many unnatural ingredients, poisons, and infertility (polysorbate 80). 3. Religiously I am a Christian and per bible law we don't follow this practice. 4. I was currently pregnant at the time.

Although I had filed a religious exemption, Aurora called my pastor and spoke with him. After declining to accept my exemption, I wrote a letter to the Aurora Vaccination board stating that what they were doing was unconstitutional and violated civil rights code. At this point I created a website; Stop Aurora Vaccination. Org (which I found out later was blocked by google), and radio show to alert other fellow employees about the unfairness of Aurora's actions. I handed out several fliers about the mandatory vaccination unfairness and educated my fellow employees on their freedom. Although my letter reached the Aurora Vaccination Board, they contacted me several times via phone belittled me regarding my choice not to vaccinate. Despite several calls from Aurora Vaccination Board, my exemption was not cleared. However, on what was suppose to be my very last day of employment at Aurora, after I had turned in my badge and said goodbye to my fellow workers, not even 2 hours that I had left the premises I was contacted again by the board and told that my exemption would be accepted. I worked with the company for approximately 1 more month then my contract ended and I had my baby.

It felt really good to take a stand and fight for not only my rights but the right of my unborn baby. I was simply applaud that I didn't have the right to choose what goes into my body (vaccine) and that the "caring" hospital/corporation didn't care about my personal freedom. From the standpoint of a nurse, this seems to be a trend and would appreciate it if the system would find better was to cure and treat people. Western medicine has gone beyond natural boundaries just to pinch a penny.

I have been a travel nurse for 7 years this January and believe immunity is the way to protect the body. Research is now beginning to show that vaccination, not just flu vaccines have serious LATE side effects to the immune system which are arising as Crohn's Disease, Obesity, Diabetes, and Mental Health Disorders. Why continue to inoculate when the trend shows that the vaccine is not effective? Follow the money trail.

Thank you for your time. If I could be of anymore help please feel free to call or contact me via e-mail.

Renee M. Klofanda RN-BSN
renee.klofanda@gmail.com
906-680-0068

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Stephanie <fonsfamilytrio@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:29 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: mandatory flu shots

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,
I heard you were going to fight against mandatory flu shots for health care workers. I'm a registered nurse who was made to get a flu vaccine in order to keep my employment. I have been able to avoid getting the flu shot for the first 14 years of my nursing career as its always been a choice. I never got the flu or the shot. I've always felt that the flu vaccine is nothing but toxic poison, a neuro toxin, with very little benefit, which is backed up by all of the natural doctors and most chiropractors. The flu vaccine has been proven to be just a guess of what viruses may be present. Most of their guesses are wrong. During my 15th year as a nurse, Aurora forced their employees to get one. Being a single mother, I had to maintain employment in order to keep our house and car. I begged to be allowed to be exempt from it as I have hashimoto's disease (an autoimmune disease already compromising my immune system) and my mom got sarcoidosis after she got the flu vac. Despite my medical history and family history, I was FORCED to let someone inject a POISON into my arm, if I wanted to keep a paycheck. Forcing people to inject poison in their bodies is something that should NOT be allowed anywhere, let alone in the United States of America- land of freedom. I had a bad reaction, causing me to be highly irritable, my skin felt like it was crawling, I felt like I wanted to shoot everyone in my path with a gun (thankfully I don't own any guns nor have I ever had this weird psycho feeling), my hands were shaky, my kids didn't want to be around me for WEEKS because everything irritated me and I yelled at everyone. Its hard to describe many of the neurological symptoms I had. I also had severe nausea. My restless leg syndrome, which I was able to be completely free from symptoms prior to the flu vaccine, came back full force. I felt MISERABLE for SIX LONG AGONIZING MONTHS. Imagine feeling like your skin is crawling with bugs for months. I still don't feel like I ever fully recovered, as my hands still have a fine shake to them, my lungs require more asthma medication than I have ever needed in my entire life, and my endocrinologist has been unable to keep my hashimoto's stable, my eyes also itch constantly - something that I never had before getting forced to get the flu shot.
It is a **proven fact** that THE BEST way to prevent infection is through proper hand washing. Its also proven that Vit D fights off the flu BETTER than the flu shot. Why aren't companies encouraging a more natural and healthy way to boost your immune system that actually works without side effects and poor guesses. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE fight against mandatory flu shots for anyone.

Thank you,
Stephanie Fons

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Chuck Milhlbauer <jamie1979@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:51 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: The Mandated Flu Shot

Hello,

I am writing to tell you how appalled I am that I have to have a toxic concoction of unhealthy chemicals injected into my arm, or else I can "consider myself unemployed." I work for a medical clinic dealing with patients all day long. I have never had the flu, because I do what I feel necessary to keep myself from getting sick and passing it on to my patients. There is Formaldehyde in the flu shot; I am well aware that this is a cancer causing agent. This, to me, is absolutely disturbing and down-right scary that we are subjected to this. It's blackmail! Working in the lab, many of our lab techs say that the rapid flu tests that they test that come back positive are almost always from people that got the shot. We see first hand that this does not work. I won't even get into all of the possible side effects of this with no guarantee that I will wind up with some life long ailing disease. Since all of the ingredients in this shot seem to change from year to year, no long term study can be done. I sadly feel as though I am living in a communist world and have to subject myself to this BS or else...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!!

Many prayers will be sent that this bill can be reversed. I passed along your email to many of my coworkers and peers. Hopefully, together, we can all make a difference!

Thanks again,

Jamie Mihlbauer
321 Morris Street #6
Pewaukee, WI 53072
262-347-7994

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Nicole Koller <nicmk@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 11:03 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Cc: Nicole Koller
Subject: Assembly bill 247

Senator Thiesfeldt,

I just heard that you will be addressing the Bill 247 tomorrow and strongly support your efforts in allowing employees the right to choose vaccination of the seasonal flu vaccine.

I have been an RN in Labor and Delivery for 16 years. I received the flu vaccination sporadically through the years. However, after my last flu vaccination in the fall of 2006 I become very sick with body aches and general malaise for months. I struggled well into the spring of 2007-suffering from Mono and intermittent bouts of spontaneous tachycardia.

I have never received the flu vaccination again and I never have suffered like that again. I currently lead a very healthy lifestyle and refuse to inject toxins into my body unwillingly!

After doing much research on studies of the ineffectiveness of the seasonal flu vaccine, the toxins involved and the possible side effects, I proudly choose to wear the facemask at work as an alternative to receiving the vaccination! However, I do not believe employers should be able to dictate or reprimand an employee for making a very personal choice to not receive it! Plus, it strongly affects patient care. It interferes with the intimate nurse patient relationship by placing a nonverbal barrier between the care provider and the patient.

Please continue your efforts on this very important matter that affects so many individuals giving and receiving medical care.

Sincerely,
Nicole Koller, RN

Sent from my iPhone 📱

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Matthews, Meagan

From: agape@ticon.net
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:05 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Nurse losing her job due to mandatory flu vaccine.

Dear Rep.Thiesfeldt,

First I want to thank you for not giving up on the issue of mandatory flu shots. I work at a facility that has mandatory flu shots and I am no longer able to work there because I did not want the shot. I did take it last year- because I needed the job. There are many people at this facility who have told me that they would not take the shot if they were not going to lose their jobs for refusing it. Last year, all the residents at our long term care facility were vaccinated as well as the staff- and we still had cases of the flu in the facility. I am having a hard time finding new employment because there are so few facilities that do not require the shot. I truly resent, as an American citizen, being forced to inject my body with something in order to keep my job. It is especially difficult in light of vaccine pharma's history of not doing what is in the best interest of the populace. I have done my homework on this issue and am aware of the times that vaccines were known to be unsafe and still distributed to be injected to innocent, trusting, unsuspecting people. I have a very strong immune system and rarely get sick. I feel that it is my right to choose between the risks and benefits of any medical intervention- including a vaccine.

Thanks to you and your colleagues for your work on this issue. It truly is an important one. May God bless all of your for your efforts to restore our right to make this decision for ourselves- without coercion.

Sincerely,

Janine Curtin RN

(69)

I am writing this letter in the hope that you will support/cosponsor Draft LRB0020 (No Flu Shot Mandates for Healthcare Workers). I am enclosing supportive documentation that show there is little evidence that the influenza vaccine is effective and to respect the professional judgement of healthcare workers (HCWs).

Demicheli et al. (2004) in their meta-analysis of published studies determined that yearly recommended influenza vaccines had low effectiveness against clinical influenza cases, and minimally reduced lost work time. Geier, King, and Geier (2006) found between 1979 and 2000 the influenza vaccine had little or no effect over the U.S. population for preventing death rate, case rate, and rate of hospitalizations with influenza as the first-line discharge diagnosis. These researchers concluded universal immunization of healthy adults with influenza vaccine is not supported.

Cochrane Database System Review (updated July 2010) comparing 50 randomized controlled trial or quasi-trials comparing influenza with placebo or no intervention in healthy adults aged 16-65, vaccination had a modest effect on time off work and no effect on hospital admissions or complication rates such as pneumonia. Furthermore, a February 2010 review examined influenza vaccination of HCWs caring for individuals greater than age 60 and concluded there is no evidence that vaccinating HCWs prevents influenza in elderly residents in long term care facilities. The review was unable to find information on co-interventions with HCW vaccination such as hand washing, face masks when ill, early detection of laboratory-proven influenza, quarantine, avoiding admissions, anti-virals, and asking HCWs with influenza like illness not to work.

The American Academy of Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) cited in their letter to Colorado Public Health Officials (2011), "not aware of any studies of the relative risk of transmission by unimmunized workers compared with immunized workers who may have a subclinical, asymptomatic illness with viral shedding." Furthermore, if an outbreak were to occur of virulent influenza routine immunization will not be protective and has the potential to acutally increase susceptibility (Globe and Mail, Sept. 9, 2009, cited in Doctors for Disaster Preparedness Newsletter, September 2009). The AAPS also notes the mask requirement is "particularly unjustified." Those whom are vaccinated could transmit the influenza virus just as an

unvaccinated person (Dec. 2011). Additionally, other patients and family members not vaccinated or vaccinated that enter the hospital or clinic facility have the potential to spread the disease. The mask requirement seems to be "nothing more than a punitive retaliation against those who decline the vaccine" (Orient, J December 2011).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) believe there is insufficient scientific evidence for the federal government to promote mandatory influenza vaccination programs. They furthermore note the vaccine is no magic bullet and have seen no evidence that demonstrates a 90% vaccination rate strived for by Health People 2020 goals is in fact necessary (OSHA's Official Position on Flu Vaccination of Healthcare Workers January, 2012). They are convinced influenza vaccination is generally beneficial and are supportive of efforts to promote vaccination but exemptions should be allowed for HCWs for medical, religious, and personal objections.

If you need further information I encourage you to read:

Doshi, Peter. Influenza: marketing vaccine by marketing disease. BMJ 2013;346:f3037.
(<http://www.bmj.com/content/346/bmj.f3037>)

Effectiveness of Flu Vaccine Raises More Red Flags (<http://www.nvic.org/NVIC-Vaccine-News/March-2013/effectiveness-of-flu-vaccine-raises-more-red-flags.aspx>)

Labor Unions Oppose Mandatory Flu Shots as AMA Cherry-Picks Ethics to Endorse Vaccine Mandate

<http://www.nvic.org/NVIC-Vaccine-News/August-2012/labor-unions-oppose-mandatory-flu-shots-as-ama-che.aspx>

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Steve Meress <SMeress@foxvalleywellness.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:35 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Attachments: Letter to Health Care Workers - Flu.docx

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt. I know you are interested and involved in mandatory vaccination requirements policies in WI and I applaud you in your desire to address this forced policy upon employees despite known complications from these vaccines. I am enclosing a letter through my Integrative Medicine group for your information. I think you may find it useful.

I also wanted to thank you for The Blue Book sent to my residence. Thank you again.
Sincerely

Steven Meress MD FACP ABHM, President and Owner
Fox Valley Wellness Center/Midwest Hyperbarics/Pure Reflections of Fox Valley
180 Knights Way
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
920-922-5433 877-676-5433
Fax 920-922-5422
smeress@foxvalleywellness.com
www.foxvalleywellness.com

Dear _____,

Thank you for contacting NVIC on this matter. We've been contacted by many health care workers, students, and professionals concerning the matter of mandatory vaccinations. We are now aware that there are many national organizations on record as opposing mandatory vaccines without flexible medical, religious and personal, philosophical, or conscientious belief exemptions. If you are a member of any of these organizations, you may be able to get assistance from local chapters in your area. Please use the following link for more information on these organizations. [Labor Unions Oppose Mandatory Flu Shots as AMA Cherry-Picks Ethics to Endorse Vaccine Mandates](#)

We keep much of the information we are providing to you today on our website at www.NVIC.org and update it regularly, as well as publish a free eNewsletter. If you do not already [receive our newsletter](#), joining is free and it is a good way to stay up-to-date on this issue. We also provide on our [state law webpages](#) information about health care worker vaccination requirements. Just click on a state and you will see a link to this information in our Quick Facts box.

NVIC's staff is working hard through the Advocacy Portal to help like-minded people in each state to protect their rights and prevent mandatory vaccination in their state. We encourage you to sign up for our [Advocacy Portal](#) and join with other like-minded grassroots activists working to protect and expand vaccine exemptions in your state. By signing up, you will be connected directly to your lawmakers and receive action alerts, newsletters, and tips so you can be an advocate for the right to informed consent in the vaccine decision-making process. Please make sure that you indicate that you are a health care worker opposing mandatory vaccines by marking yes in the appropriate section. Once you sign up at the NVIC Advocacy Portal you can access information specific to health care workers under the "National" tab found across the top of page.

The following links contain valuable information regarding the subject of health care workers and mandated flu shots:

- [NVAC Says: Mandate Flu Shots for Health Care Workers](#)
- [Why Influenza Vaccine Mandates are Ineffective & Unwise Public Policy](#)
- [Influenza Deaths: The Hype vs. The Evidence](#)
- [More NVIC Influenza Information & Articles](#)

You can visit NVIC's [Vaccine Freedom Wall](#) on our website and read stories from health care workers who are facing the same problem. We would like to encourage you to add your story to this wall. At least one of the health care workers on this page has started a petition in her facility to fight the system and many have succeeded in banning together to obtain exemptions.

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I work in the medical field and I do not feel that employers should be able to force us to receive the flu shot. There is no way to 100% guaranty that we're going to be protected from whatever strain is going around at a particular time and a lot of the things in the shot were not meant to be in the human body. As far as adverse effects, I was pregnant last year and less than a week after receiving the flu vaccine I went into premature labor and delivered my daughter 6 weeks early. They say there is no way to prove that the vaccine had anything to do with that but how can they prove to me that it didn't?

11/10/13

I hope the picture I sent to you will be a help to ban the mandatory flu shot. We were forced into having the shot or we would of been dismissed of our job duties. Well as you all can see some of us had a very bad reaction to it. This is not the AMERICAN way to force someone to put in their bodies and this be the result. Do the right thing and tell companies this is not right. This is not the AMERICAN way to treat people to force their thought's and beliefs on the and then threaten their livelyhood. It's wrong and UNAMERICAN. Thank you. Please pass this Bill. Americans are waiting for you to do the right thing!
Sinceley XXXX

Sent from my iPad



Testimony 11/13/13

Vicki Arndt of Milwaukee Wisconsin

Since becoming a nurse in 1995, I have dedicated my life to advocating for patients in acute care settings. Managing in the surgery department, protecting patient rights and advocating for patients in the perioperative setting is my area of expertise. Patients have the right to refuse treatment. It can be conflicting to go into a heart surgery with a Jehovah's witness who refuses blood products, and risks their life. A cancer patient may refuse painful treatments choosing not to suffer. Respecting a patient's right to refuse certain care is core to a nurse's belief system. This right to refuse certain medical care should be extended to health care workers. After evaluating the risks and benefits of flu vaccination, and making a personal decision that the risks outweigh the benefits, a health care worker should not have to risk losing their employment. I did not sign up for the military where I signed my rights away and agreed to subject myself to vaccination(s).

I was denied both medical and religious exemptions at Aurora Health Care (see exhibit 1). I was terminated on January 3, 2012 for not complying with the mandatory vaccine policy and lost my employment as a nursing manager after 9 years of progressive advancement and success in the organization. I currently have a pending Equal Rights Division complaint against them (ERD Case CR201200198). My current employer, ProHealth Care has also denied my medical and religious exemptions, and I am facing another difficult decision about having to make a decision of whether I adhere to my moral and ethical beliefs about vaccine, or succumb to unwanted, risky, and harmful forced medical care to save my financial and economic well-being.

Since becoming a nurse I voluntarily submitted to annual flu vaccinations, believing I was doing what was right for myself and the community I served. However, after receiving the 2009 H1N1 vaccine I began experiencing symptoms of narcolepsy. Narcolepsy is a very stigmatizing condition, and I was very discreet about it, especially being in a leadership position. In 2010 learned there was a European outbreak of Narcolepsy that was tied to the 2009 H1N1 vaccine. While the CDC acknowledges this connection, it claims there were no reports in the US. In this report, you will note the CDC believes an adjuvant in the vaccine (not used in the US) was to blame for the outbreak and there were no reports of narcolepsy in VAERS in the US. Yet I personally reported such a reaction to VAERS, which is searchable and in the data.

My western medicine doctor who diagnosed the narcolepsy was not willing to link the condition to vaccine (despite the reports in Europe). He was happy to prescribe me controlled substances to keep me awake and pills to help me sleep. It was a horrible time of my life. I began to seek alternative care where I was able to discontinue this aggressive treatment that left me feeling awful, in favor of more complementary and natural remedies, including the power of belief, herbal supplements, and acupuncture. I no longer suffer narcolepsy symptoms after the care of Ms Perri. (see Exhibit 2)

My family also suffers from chronic disease. My niece is autistic, which has been linked to vaccine. My mother, sister, and nephew suffer from demyelinating diseases which are also linked to vaccine. I suffered symptoms of narcolepsy- correlated at a time when there was a breakout of narcolepsy linked

to flu vaccine. I should have the right to make a decision for myself, that I do not have to be subjected to forced vaccine. Philosophical exemptions should be allowed. I no longer wish to subject myself to flu vaccine.

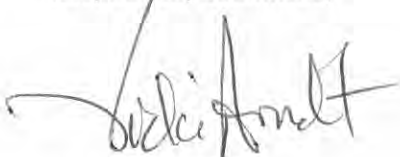
In the medical community there is the theory of herd immunity:

^[1]*Herd immunity (or community immunity) describes a form of immunity that occurs when the vaccination of a significant portion of a population (or herd) provides a measure of protection for individuals who have not developed immunity. Herd immunity theory proposes that, in contagious diseases that are transmitted from individual to individual, chains of infection are likely to be disrupted when large numbers of a population are immune or less susceptible to the disease. The greater the proportion of individuals who are resistant, the smaller the probability that a susceptible individual will come into contact with an infectious individual. Vaccination acts as a sort of firebreak or firewall in the spread of the disease, slowing or preventing further transmission of the disease to others. Unvaccinated individuals are indirectly protected by vaccinated individuals, as the latter are less likely to contract and transmit the disease between infected and susceptible individuals. Hence, a public health policy of herd immunity may be used to reduce spread of an illness and provide a level of protection to a vulnerable, unvaccinated subgroup. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herd_immunity*

Once organizations attain herd immunity (defined as 80%) in their employed staff, the business need becomes neutral. As a manager who has limited contact in patient care areas, and when I do- working in surgery- I am wearing a mask, the job necessity is arguable.

In America, we should not be subjecting employees to mandatory vaccine without allowing for philosophical, moral, or ethical exemptions. Hospitals limit employees to medical exemption (only signed off by a medical doctor) or a religious exemption. I have been denied both of these at the cost of my employment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Arndt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "A".

Vicki (Bailey) Arndt

December 1, 2011

Vicki Bailey,

Re: Request for Religious Exemption from Influenza Vaccination

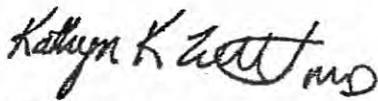
Aurora Health Care has made the decision to make the influenza vaccination a condition of employment with the organization. We made the decision knowing that this will protect our patients, families and each other. Many of our patients are elderly or severely ill, and due to their medical condition often have suppressed immune systems. In such situations, succumbing to the flu can be serious or deadly. Unvaccinated health care workers are considered a key cause of flu outbreaks in health care settings. Vaccination of health care workers has been linked to a significant reduction in patient mortality.

Your request for religious exemption has been reviewed by our panel and has been denied. The information you have provided is insufficient to establish your eligibility for a religious-based exemption.

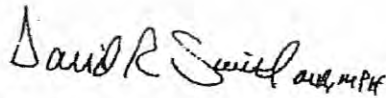
With this decision, the expectation is that you will receive the influenza vaccination by Dec. 31, 2011. Caregiver flu clinics have been scheduled to make this process as easy as possible for you. If there are no additional clinics scheduled in your area, please contact your local Employee Health representative to arrange for a vaccination. If you receive your vaccination from another source, please turn in the required form, completed by the clinician providing the vaccination, to Employee Health. The form is available on the Flu Resource Center on iConnect or from your local Employee Health department.

Please be aware that failure to receive an influenza vaccine by December 31, 2011, will result in voluntary resignation from employment with Aurora Health Care. If you do not intend to receive the flu vaccine, please give proper notice, typically three weeks prior to December 31, 2011, to receive your PTO accrual payout.

Please contact Rhonda Taylor Parris at 414-647-3346 or email rhonda.taylor.parris@aurora.org if you would like to discuss our decision or if you have any questions.



Kathy Leonhardt, MD, MPH
Vice President / Patient Safety Officer
Office of Patient Experience
Aurora Health Care



David R. Smith, MD, MPH
Vice President / Care Management
Office of Patient Experience
Aurora Health Care

June 1, 2011

Acupuncture for Everything! LLC
5603 7th Ave
Kenosha WI, 53140
262-358-0991

To whom it may concern,

This letter is written on behalf of Vicki Bailey, to excuse her from mandatory vaccinations.

Vaccines contain many chemical immune system sensitizers such as formaldehyde, mercury, aluminum compounds, phenol, acetone, antifreeze, monosodium glutamate, and aspartame. These toxins often make the body more susceptible to infection. Given the medical history of Vicki Bailey, she should not be given vaccinations.

Sincerely,
Tina Perri, L.Ac., M.S.O.M., M.Ed., B.S., B.A

Vicki Bailey Pg 4 of 5

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Sally Horton <cowdown55@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, November 08, 2013 1:53 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Vaccine opt out

Thank you so much for sponsoring this bill. I am a nurse who just got a forced flu vaccine last Friday. My employer went to forced vaccines 2 years ago. I was at least able to hold out for a mercury free one. I work in a nursing home where they also vaccinate all the residents. They say we must get the vaccine to protect the residents. When I pointed out that the residents were ALREADY protected by THEIR vaccine, so we shouldn't NEED to be vaccinated as well, I was told that the immune systems of the elderly don't completely react to the vaccine. The problem with that is that I myself am pushing 60 years! Also interesting is that while we are required to sign off that we got the vaccine, the paper we sign says we received information on the pros and cons of the vaccine. I have yet to see my employer provide anything 'con' in writing. and certainly not at the time of vaccination.

I freely admit to being part of the 'tin foil hat' brigade. I believe there is something to Bill Gates' comments on vaccines to reduce the population. I know that the AIDS outbreak in Africa exactly mirrors the area where the polio vaccine was given, and that the polio vaccine I received as a child may have been cultured on contaminated tissue has has been shown to cause cancer.

At best, forced vaccinations are part of a plan to control/reduce the worlds population. At best, they are a violation of our Constitutional right to be secure in our persons. I will actively work against ANY candidate or ANY party that violates the Constitution

I cannot be at the hearing on Wednesday as I work, but if my comments will be at all helpful to you, please feel free to use them and/or my name as being AGAINST forced vaccinations.

Thank you very much
Sally Horton
721 Hyatt St.
Janesville, WI
920-988-7073

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Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Linda Kauffeld <lindakauffeld@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 07, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: RE: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled

Dear Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt,
Thanks so much for challenging this. I feel so bad for my daughter who works in Hospice, currently mandated, "mask or vaccine". So, she'll be wearing "the mask" until May. God Bless you! Below is a testimony I sent to UW Health when I read of them pushing the vaccines on their employees , again!!!
Linda

Nov. 12, 2012

Dear UW Health,
It is with great sadness and concern learning of your possible decision to make your employees make a choice between employment and a mandated flu shot. These are the people who have faithfully served you and tended to the concern, wellbeing and health of their patients.

Last year, I was employed at St Mary's Health Care Center in Madison. As a COTA for 35 years in geriatric care with a totally clean record with extra bonuses for professionalism, I was forced to make a choice of "mask or flu shot". Based on years of concern for the growing problems now surfacing as a result of these vaccinations, with questionable at best "protection" I chose, "the mask". Fortunately for me, my new job started the week before Dec 1st, the "starting date of shot or mask". Although I was very relieved to acquire a new job, I was saddened for the people who succumbed to the shot, with little to no awareness to the potential side effects.

When can we call America "free" when our employers now have the ability to force their employees to inject into their person toxins. Toxins, that when researched are in question to their health benefits and with even some studies indicating that they are not only NOT beneficial to their intended purpose; but even dangerously hazardous with long term neurological damage to the recipient of such vaccine.

I am enclosing just a few articles for your review. There are many more. Please don't force this onto your loyal and faithful servants who tend to the care of your patients. Give them the freedoms that we as Americas have and should continue to have. That being, after our own personal research of the risks as a result of these chemicals verses the possible claimed benefits, that each person choose for themselves the treatment course.

I'm not saying we shouldn't be concerned for the flu. But, like anything, there are other ways to address the spread of the flu. Educate your people as to how to strengthen their immune system, thus not only will you have healthier staff, but you will save money with less sick time.

Please review the enclosed articles and spend some time learning about these vaccines and outcomes. Since there are such discrepancies as to the benefits/hazards PLEASE do not force this onto yourselves and your employees without more research. Like all medical procedures, Americans should be given the choice to learn about the procedure, and then make informed choices and accept the outcomes of their choices.

Dr Mercola has much information to offer on his web site regarding the results of his research and alternate methods to avoid the flu. National Vaccine Information Center is another source of information. I believe Barb Fisher founded this organization as a result of personally experiencing very bad effects in her family from vaccinations. There are others. Truly a very controversial subject; one that SHOULD NOT BE MANDATED!!! Thank you for your consideration and may you proceed with education and extreme caution. I would very much appreciate a response to this letter.

Linda Kauffeld

P.S. Incidentally, I have been employed one year at my current 120 bed skilled nursing rehab facility. There is NO pressure what so ever to get the flu vaccine and last year we had no significant out breaks of the flu. WHY ALL THE HYPE!

PPS Added 11/7/2013. I have now been employed at the same facility as mentioned above. I'm so thankful this facility puts VERY little pressure on it's employees to get vaccinated. I have also gone through two flu seasons at this facility with absolutely NO significant flu outbreaks. I might add, that I have worked in skilled nursing home facilities for 30 years, and the last two years at this facility, the instances of flu were perhaps even less than normal. OR, they just don't get all hyped up about it. People get the flu, rest, drink fluids, eat healthy, AND they get well and their immunity is stronger as a result. I grow so weary of all the hype!!!!

11/8/13

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My name is Lisa and I would like to share my personal experience because of a mandatory flu vaccine. In the year 2011 my place of employment implemented the mandatory flu vaccine for all of its associates. I, never having a flu shot and no reason to try to get an exemption, went and received my shot. If I did not do it I would lose my job. Who wants that? September 16th 2011 a co-worker and I went together to get our shot. Within the following week I began to feel sore and just not right. I was told soreness was a normal reaction and it would go away. I continued on, going to work, being a wife, Mom etc. This feeling did not go away. Many nights I was crawling on the floor to put my children to bed. I will spare some personal medical details, but by October 1st I was officially an inpatient at the very same facility that made this vaccine mandatory... I went days going from bed to wheel chair. (At this point I could not walk on my own, I was paralyzed from the waist down.) After many tests I was given a diagnosis. Transverse Myelitis. A direct result from the flu vaccine. It has been two years now. I still have numbness, weakness in my legs, back pain and a lot of other issues related to my MANDATORY flu vaccine injury... I blindly followed the policy in order to keep my job. I was an active 35 year old mother of two very active kids. And now, not only do I suffer the pain of TM. My family also suffers. Unless this happens to you or somebody you know, you will never quite understand how devastating this can be.

Lisa Sabel

11/10/13

As we approach the flu season, my employer develops a flu vaccine policy, demanding employees to be vaccinated. Through the years, and as recent as last week, I have treated patients with devastating complications from these vaccines. Therefore, I feel my employer should not be able to force me to receive these vaccines. I have complied to wear a face mask while treating patients, and while on duty.

I have dedicated 24 years to the company, and have been advised by my physician NOT to receive the vaccine. I feel threatened and should not be forced to seek alternative employment.

Please withhold my name

11/8/13

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am a nurse who has been administering the seasonal flu vaccine for several years, though I choose not to receive the vaccine myself. This year maybe the last year for me to work and not have had the vaccine, I see my employer getting closer and closer to mandating flu vaccine for all employees.

I was very disturbed this fall to be giving injections to hospital employees, in tears, saying "I don't want this but I have to do it to keep my job." I heard this many times and saw heartache on their face. These people are told they could be "carriers" and might infect others I would like to see the research on that statement.

I would think, what kind of a country have we become, to force a person to take into their body substances they don't believe in? Substances that are detrimental to their health. The research says the flu vaccine is 56% effective. The enclosed pamphlet that accompanies the vaccine does not indicate the vaccine is fully safe for pregnant or lactating women, these women just say my MD says I have to have the shot.

What kind of a country do we live in when the government is not concerned about individual values, that we are brow beaten, bullied by coworkers into receiving the vaccine.

Please do not use my name publically, I may want to work for this company next year.

(6)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: jscgroff@charter.net
Sent: Saturday, November 09, 2013 9:17 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

Thank you for the email regarding the influenza vaccine exemption bill. I am unable to attend the hearing due to my work schedule but I would like to express my concerns about the possibility of being forced to receive a vaccine that I do not want.

A while back, I visited my physician who came in wearing a mask. She explained that she was being forced to wear the mask because she had refused to be vaccinated for influenza. Since then I have heard that it is mandatory to be vaccinated if someone works in a medical setting. It made me angry that people are being forced to receive a vaccine or lose their job. My concern is that eventually, we will all be forced to do the same.

I work for a school district and each year, we receive numerous emails encouraging us to receive the flu vaccine. Personally, as an adult, I have had the flu three times in 30 years. I am extremely careful about washing my hands, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, exercising, and taking supplements. I feel that my lifestyle has made my immune system strong and thus, have not felt the need to be vaccinated.

The publicity the flu vaccine has received in recent years makes me question the real need for being immunized against the flu. The statistics I have read indicate that the number of people dying from the flu today is the same as it was years ago. Years back, I never heard of people getting a flu shot and now, I hear it constantly. I question who is benefitting, the patients or the pharmaceutical companies? Does it all boil down to money?

Receiving a flu vaccine should be up to the individual, not mandated. The proponents of receiving a flu shot will argue that the flu won't be passed on to others if we all get the vaccine. My thought is that we all need to be proactive and take steps to keep our bodies healthy in order to fight the germs that cause the flu.

My hope is that we, as individuals, will be able to choose the vaccines we want to receive, and not have to choose between a shot or keeping our jobs.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Sue Groff

11/9/13

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Thanks for working to get this bill pushed forward!

I work in healthcare so there is a strong push/mandate for all to be immunized.

But as the statistics stated in your bill...this vaccine does not have the efficacy of all the other required vaccines for employment.

It frightens me because such a large volume of vaccine is rushed through production...hence huge concern over quality control, but worse, the vaccine is just someone's best guess.

I grew up in the 60's,70's. My father was a general practitioner who had us pictured on the front page of our local newspaper taking the polio vaccine.

But he never wanted us to take the flu vaccine for all of your researched information and his fear of Guillain-Barre virus.

He told us that if we kept ourselves healthy, we would recover from the flu, but Guillain-Barre lasted forever. It always leaves residual damage.

So I have always followed his advice and lived a healthy lifestyle.

I wore a mask last year as it was the alternative choice...but this year there was no choice if it was for personal reasons or concerns for my health.

I had to take it as I need my employment..but I felt totally violated...bullied in to the choice.

Please, Please, continue to work to pass this bill.

YOU MAY USE THE CONTENT OF THIS E-MAIL BUT PLEASE PROTECT MY PRIVACY...I NEED EMPLOYMENT.

Thanks for your time,

Worried, scared, frustrated Wisconsin resident

11/9/13

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Please do not use my name or email addressfor obvious reasons as you noted in your letter.

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

Thank you for taking on this important subject.

I work for Aurora Advanced Healthcare. I worked for Advanced Heath Care who became part of Aurora in 2008. In November of 2011, after I had already worked with Advanced Health Care and then Aurora a combined total of 12 years I was told, along with the approximately 30,000 other employees, that now, part of the 'condition for employment' was to get a yearly flu vaccine. We were told this was to protect the patients.

I was appalled and astounded that I had to do this! Many, many of my co-workers including physicians were astounded and upset too. In my case, I work in an office building, not in contact at all with patients and didn't feel that this should apply to me. Aurora felt that if one level of staff is required to get the shot it would be fair for all too get it. (I am not a health care worker in direct contact with patients partly because I do not want to get the other mandated shots for those who do work in the industry.) Further we were told that if we did not comply we would loose our jobs. We were told if we left or 'chose' not to get the shot that we couldn't file for unemployment because we were 'choosing' to leave employment. I would be forced to choose between my job and my opposition to put unwanted chemicals into my body. My husband was unemployed at the time and choosing not to get the shot meant no income for us.

That is a tough choice. I considered looking for another job but that was a rough time for getting jobs as the economy was in tough times. Jobs, GOOD JOBS were not plentiful. Aurora noted that there were exemption possibilities such as and allergy to egg or any component of the flu shot or for religious reasons. We would have to prove one of these for an exemption. After a visit/discussion with my naturopath I decided to have an egg allergy lab test done. My test results were one point shy of being positive for an egg allergy but the lab noted that they could not rule out anaphylaxis so I did eventually get an exemption. Whew. I was very relieved. But I saw the anguish in my co-workers who did not want the shot and no way out. At that time many heard the story of one person in our Forest Home site who ended up with paralysis from getting the vaccine. That was scary. Many were looking for a way out-fast! I know some consulted attorneys.

In 2012 I received a letter from Aurora noting that I was still exempt from getting the vaccine due to my previous lab results so no vaccine in 2012, and the letter further stated that I would be exempt for the term of my employment with Aurora Health Care. This made me happy. But in July 2013 I receive another letter telling me that I would be exempt this year but there is now a new formula for the vaccine that does not include egg. They noted that I should discuss getting this vaccine with my physician. They further noted that because my exemption was due to an egg allergy and there is now an egg-free vaccine I will need to reapply for an exemption in 2014. I don't like this threat hanging over me again. I now have to work with this anxiety until I find out what exemptions I might qualify for or

not....and the uncertainty of future income. It makes planning for anything in the future impossible.

It is now vaccine time again and I was speaking with a few of my co-workers just the other day about their hesitation in getting the vaccine and how they are putting it off as long as possible. Someone who received the vaccine passed out shortly after returning to their workstation. An ambulance had to be called. They were noting that if they had the choice they would not get the vaccine but lamented 'they have no choice'. This is sad to see and hear.

I do hope that something can be done about companies mandating what we put into our bodies. If I were an employer I would want to be able to run my company as I see fit...but I believe this goes beyond running the company. This is running my life and invasive of my privacy and I find this too controlling for an employer over my body. This is also very self serving for a large healthcare company. I am finding it difficult to continue working for a company who only has the bottom line in mind while claiming to be helping their employees 'live well'. I appreciate their offer for a free vaccine but the choice should be mine. Patients, as well as my co-workers, can get the flu from any source and not just from entering a healthcare facility.

Thank you for any efforts to take away my employer's rights to control my body.

11/9/13

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for the AB 247. I along with many other hospital employees are so grateful that someone cares about our concerns regarding mandated flu shots as a condition of employment. We are all hoping and praying that this bill is able to be passed. I have been an RN for almost 25 years. I work in a large central WI hospital which began mandating the influenza vaccine last year. We were able to wear masks last year if we refused the vaccine. I wore my mask faithfully along with my other coworkers who refused the flu vaccine. (Just an FYI-the mask wears were the ones who did NOT get sick). This year they changed their policy. We were told either get the flu shot or you would not receive a raise. Next year the policy gets even tougher-no shot -no job.

I am all for protecting the patients but this is not the way to do it. It is not right to force people into mandated medical treatment and threaten them with their jobs/professions if they don't comply. Nobody should be forced to receive a vaccine that contains many chemicals such as formaldehyde, Tritonx-100, MSG ,polysorbate 80, neomycin, polymyxin to name a few. Any medical treatment exposes the recipient to varying degrees of risk. The influenza vaccine has the potential to cause disability or death. If vaccines were universally beneficial and harmless, mandated hospital policies would NOT be necessary for enforcement. It is unfair, irresponsible and unethical for employers to force healthcare workers to choose between their health/ beliefs and their livelihood/professions. Please consider this when deciding to pass this bill. I know MANY people would be so grateful if this bill is able to be passed. Let Wisconsin do the RIGHT thing. Thank you very much. (Name withheld)

11/9/13

10

Hi Jeremy,

Thank you for taking up this effort. I can't make it to Madison for the hearing and I would like my name withheld for obvious reasons. I would just like to tell my brief story and have you take a look at a powerful article by Dr. Peter Doshi (link below). Hopefully you can use the information in the article at your hearing.

I work in Healthcare and as such am subject to the mandated flu shot. I have been able to "opt out" the last few years, but the policy is tightening and I fear it will eventually transition into a vaccinate or terminate policy.

This year we had the option to either get the shot or opt out by getting a declination form signed by a doctor or religious leader. Even if you are fortunate enough to get the form signed, you still have to wear a mask for the duration of the CDC declared Flu epidemic time period. I was able to get the declination form signed by my priest. Others were not so fortunate. They couldn't get the form signed by a doctor or religious leader and therefore were forced to get the vaccination before they could report to work. And these are people that were "absolutely" opposed to the getting the shot.

I am astonished at the lack of outrage to this absolute assault on our personal liberties. The "drones" have no problem standing in line to take something into their bodies that they really know nothing about. They just trust that the pharmaceutical money brokers and the government have their best interest at heart. It's really absurd how naïve people are. Even if there were no ill effects from the shot, which I don't believe, you still have a God given, inalienable right in this country to "decline" taking something into your body that you don't want. I think this is still America, but I'm starting to wonder lately what happened to my country.

Below is a link to the most comprehensive, informative, and compelling article that I have read regarding why NOT to get the flu shot. Could you please review the article and include it in your hearing. I think it's very powerful information. I've also included another link to an article by Dr. Mercola. It's another very compelling article.

Dr. Doshi

<http://www.newsmxhealth.com/Headline/influenza-virus-flu-vaccine-Peter-Doshi-Ph-D-/2013/05/16/id/504942>

Dr. Mercola

[http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/09/18/flu-shot-increases-flu-illness.aspx'](http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/09/18/flu-shot-increases-flu-illness.aspx)

I greatly appreciate your efforts in this regard Jeremy, as do others in my circle who share the same passion for protecting liberty.

Sincerely,

XXX

11/10/13

Representative Thiesfeldt,

I have recently been informed of your effort to assist healthcare workers mandated to receive the influenza vaccine as a condition of their employment, and I applaud you for your efforts.

I am a registered nurse and endured countering this challenge within the past few years. My husband suffered from Guillan Barre Syndrome, and his neurologist advised me that my receiving the flu shot could potentially put his health at risk. When I presented this to my employer, my husband's neurologist, who works for another health care system, received a great deal of interrogation from an administrative physician within the health care system which employs me. For this reason I obtained written exemption requests from both my physician and this neurologist. I was later informed by my employer's physician that my husband's neurologist approved me to receive the vaccination. I asked for documentation from him to support the obvious disparity between the neurologist's recommendations to myself and him. He was not able to supply this, and later granted me a permanent exemption for the duration of my employment. In the meantime a great deal of unnecessary turmoil was created, including frustration by my husband's neurologist due to the ongoing questioning and interference in my husband's medical situation. In addition, I felt very threatened and mistrusted by my employer, and feared for the loss of my job.

My sincere hope is that your efforts will be successful in order to preserve health care employees their choice (be they be based upon medical, religious, or whatever personal reasons) to make their own choice whether they want to receive the influenza vaccination.

I ask that you please withhold my name/contact info if my story is to be utilized.

Thank you in advance!

11/10/13

12

To Whom it may concern,

I am employed at a health care facility in Wisconsin. This will be the third year that it is mandatory for all employees and volunteers to have a flu shot or be taken off the schedule. I am strongly against having this unknown substance put into my body with no choice.

We can fill out a Religious Exemption Form, and wear a mask during our work day but I know of many people who were turned down, me being one of them. The forms are ridiculous. They ask prior vaccinations and dates, does it really matter that our parents immunized us. Were adults now and should have choices of what is injected into us. I don't have a Religious leader. I am a Christian who believes in God and it's a personal relationship for me. I believe in the 10 commandments, and Thou Shall Not Kill is one of them. The flu vaccine and other vaccines have killed and I don't care if its once or 500 times. It should be our choice if we want to take that chance.

I was forced to receive the vaccination last year, or lose my job. This was mentally so hard for me. I had to actually block the whole thing out because it bothers me so much. I felt like I was raped. Something was put into my body that I was totally against and I can't take it back out and have no idea of what harm it has caused to me.

I think it is unconstitutional to force this on people. I don't even have patient contact. What happened to our rights? For every article for the vaccines, there is also an article against them. Shouldn't we be able to research both sides and make our own decision? I have to wonder also, Is this really about money and just being covered up by "its for yours and others health?"

Sincerely,

Someone who cares.

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Father Martin <padremartin99@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 4:31 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu shot hearing

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I would like simply to let you know that I am opposed to the idea of a mandatory flu shot. I am a Catholic priest working in Marshfield and the local hospital (Ministry St. Joseph) had stated that all of us working as chaplains would have to get the flu shot or no longer be able to assist our patients. I filled out the religious exemption form because I believe that such a demand is a breach of conscience. I got the flu shot once (1999) and it made me sick for a week. I rarely get sick - I have not had a sick day in at least 15 years. So, for me the flu shot is superfluous. Moreover, I was not consulted about this requirement beforehand, so I believe it is an unnecessary imposition. I am stubborn and do not like being told what to do, especially when I do not feel like I'm a dangerous germ-carrying person whose very presence endangers lives. Thankfully the hospital allowed me to be dispensed of the flu shot for this year. My suspicion is that unless a law is passed protecting us from such assaults on our conscience, I'll have to go through this again next year. The one thing I am certain of is that I will not be getting the flu shot. For the record, I respect those who do get the flu shot and think it's their right. Conversely, I think I have a right to refuse the flu shot.

Okay, I hope this helps you during the hearing this Wednesday. I will be praying that God impart wisdom to our legislators so that we can live free in this great country.

Thank you for your time and efforts. May God reward you!

In Christ,
Father Samuel Martin

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: mary grobelny <maryp-g@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 4:36 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: RE: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled
Attachments: flu letter.doc

I am attaching the letter that I sent to my employer declining the flu shot. It was denied stating that "it is not from a recognized religion". (I attached it to *their* religious exemption).

I emphasize strongly that I am vehemently opposed to flu vaccines and that my employer (Mercy Health System) is bullying me into receiving one.

It is imperative that we move swiftly on this this bill. All Mercy employees will be on unpaid administrative leave until they receive the shot. This will take place FRIDAY, NOV. 15!!!

Please help me in my cause to keep myself healthy and free of unsubstantiated threats.

Thank you for all you do.

In health,
Mary

To whom it may concern;

I am writing you today to explain and defend why I am declining to receive the 2013 flu vaccine. It is based on my personal convictions that are medically, legally, religiously, and philosophically supported.

Medical research has indicated that the flu is grossly exaggerated.^{1,2} Each year the World Health Organization meets to decide which flu strains should be contained. However, there are over 200 flu viruses and the flu "is constantly evolving and changing"³ "There's no predictable pattern to seasonal viruses to change and no internal clock or pattern that you can use to predict when the next pandemic virus will emerge"⁴ According to CDC data, influenza like illness (ILI) is caused by an influenza virus only about 14% of the time: stated differently, a virus other than the influenza virus causes illness 86% of the time⁵. The vaccine is not guaranteed you will be flu-free. Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of t the CDC stated, "In fact it's about 62% effective"⁶ Further data supports that there are no fewer days missed from work for those individuals who received the flu shot. In a review of 25 reports involving 60,000 adults the conclusion was "Vaccination of healthy adults only reduced risk of influenza by 6% and only reduced the number of missed work days by less than one day (0.16 days). Universally immunization of adults was not supported by the results of this review"⁷ Personally, I can not prescribe to a philosophy where their "best guess" is their means of data.

There are also many additional chemicals found in the flu shot. These include: formaldehyde, aluminum salts, gentamicin and polymyxin B, mercury (thimerosal) in high dose shot, gelatin and sulfa drugs.⁷ I am allergic to sulfa drugs. I do not want to put any allergen into my body knowing I will have an adverse reaction. More importantly, many of these ingredients are known detergents and known carcinogens. I may also have the following reaction or side effect to the vaccination: cough, diarrhea, fever, headache, irritability, muscle aches,

redness of the eyes sneezing sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, or vomiting.⁸ In addition, there is a risk of anaphylaxis, Guillain Barre Syndrome, myalgia, headache, and malaise.⁹ The influenza vaccine is also linked to narcolepsy ¹⁰ as well as acute disseminated encephalomyelitis ¹¹

I truly believe that the vaccination is an evasive medical procedure based on the above information. I believe I am supported by the right to refuse this due the direct violation of the Nuremburg Code which states I "should be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other form of constraint or coercion". Article 4 ""to avoid all unnecessary physical and mental suffering and injury" Article 6 The degree of risk to be taken should never exceed that determined by the humanitarian importance of the problem solved by the experiment. Article 9 During the course of the experiment, the human subject should be at liberty to bring the experiment to an end, if he has reached the physical and mental state, where continuation of the experiment seemed to him to be impossible.¹²

I also feel mandating vaccinations is against my religious beliefs as protected under Amendment 1 of the US Constitution. I am a Christian and believe that I should respect my body. God gave me a perfect body, mind, and soul of which I choose to respect. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. 2 Leviticus 11:44-45. Ephesians 5:27 and Romans 12:1 Injecting my body with well-known carcinogens is deeply against my religious beliefs.

I take my health very seriously. I exercise daily. I sleep 8 hrs a night. I eat a clean diet high in alkalinity and loaded in nutrients to boost my immune system. I manage my stress because I meditate, pray, and practice yoga. I eat organic as often as I can and avoid all processed, genetically modified, and fast food options. I drink lots of water. I take supplements. I wash my hands. During the winter months, I increase my dosage of Vitamin C and Vitamin D. These practices alone are known to combat the seasonal flu. ^{13,14}

These daily practices allow me to strengthen my immune system. I truly believe that injecting a combination of chemicals into my bloodstream will weaken my natural immunity. This is a strong personal and philosophical conviction that I possess based on fact and research.. Being forced into having an injection I am philosophically opposed to deeply disturbs me and is in great contradiction to my philosophical and spiritual practices. Wisconsin has a philosophical/personal belief exemption, Statute 252.04, (15), 16 which I am exercising my right to claim.

I sincerely hope you respect my concerns and wishes.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Grobelny

11/10/13

(15)

To the committee regarding AB 247

I work at Marshfield Clinic, and have been employed for 14 years and have been a dependable and great employee and have never had the flu. Because of the risk of repercussions by my writing this statement I would like to remain anonymous.

This year I will not be allowed to continue my employment if I don't not have a flu vaccination. I am sure that there is some sort of monetary benefit to the Clinic in order for them to take away my rights, which should also be illegal.

What I would like to share with this committee is that I have never felt so bullied. I cannot believe that any employer could force an employee to have a medical procedure against their will. It starts with a flu shot, once this allowed then employers will take more and more INDIVIDUAL rights away. Next maybe I should have a CTscan, Xray, DNA testing prior to signing up for employer sponsored health plans, just in case I have some underlying disease and if I do then I will be denied insurance or will be made to pay a much higher premium. **Where will this stop?** I feel as though we have gone back to Nazi Germany and communism is alive and thriving at Marshfield Clinic. I signed no contract indicating that I would have any medical procedure that my employer feels is necessary for me to keep my job.

There is also a lack of supporting evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents influenza transmission. I believe that these vaccinations are providing a false sense of security and therefore putting patients at risk.

An even greater risk exists for those that receive the vaccination. The CDC lists the following as being found in the influenza vaccination: Neomycin, Polymyxin B, formaldehyde or formalin, thimerosal, embryonated *chicken* eggs, egg albumin, gelatin, Gentamycin, Polyoxyethylene 9-10 Nonyl Phenol (Triton N-101, Octoxynol 9), chick kidney cells and Taurodeoxycholate.

Many of these are known carcinogens and detergents that have unknown effects on the human body. Chronic over exposure to antibiotics has also proven to be detrimental to overall health.

Some of the potential side effects from the vaccination include anaphylaxis, allergic asthma, redness and discomfort at the injection site, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, vasculitis, body aches, parenthesis, neuropathy, seizure, facial palsy, facial paresis, Stevens-Johnson

Syndrome, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, cough, chills, fever, encephalitis and meningitis and death.

Thimerosal has been shown to potentially increase the risk of Alzheimer's Disease, brain damage and nervous system injury. As I understand it the drug companies and employers cannot be held liable for any reaction an individual may have from any vaccine, which I understand, but only IF I CHOOSE to have this injection.

Dr. Belongia states that there are 2 types of influenza that circulate in humans: A and B Within A, there are 2 subtypes that circulate in humans: H3N2 and There are 2 different B lineage viruses (Yamagata and Victoria). The quadrivalent vaccine covers both A subtypes and both B lineages. In any given season, some or all of these viruses may be present. Last season nearly all of the A viruses in Marshfield were H3N2, and both B lineage viruses were circulating. The same was true for the US and Wisconsin. The effectiveness of the flu vaccine was 44% against A and 62% against B last year

I WILL BE TERMINATED FOR 44% and 62% effectiveness????? SERIOUSLY???? Dr. Belogia is the Director, Epidemiology Research Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation Office: 715-389-3783

I have NO CHOICE if I want to keep my job, I must have this injection or face termination. This is BULLYING and HARRASSMENT.

Workplace bullying occurs when an employee experiences a persistent pattern of mistreatment from others in the workplace that causes harm. Workplace bullying can include such tactics as verbal, nonverbal, psychological, physical abuse and humiliation. This type of aggression is particularly difficult because, unlike the typical forms of school bullying, workplace bullies often operate within the established rule and policies of their organization and their society. Bullying in the workplace is in the majority of cases reported as having been perpetrated by someone in authority over the employees. Negative effects are not limited to the employee and will certainly lead to a decline in employee morale and a change in company culture. History has shown that bullying has led to

suicides along with mental illness, alcoholism, drug abuse depression, eating disorders and many other negative health issues. I know that I have been losing sleep and find it hard to concentrate, as do others. I have also seen people give in because they have no choice if they wish to feed their family. It is my body and life and to have my employer tell me that unless I have a medical procedure, I will be terminated. This is wrong on so many different levels. This is harassment and is a perfect example of bullying and should be against the law. What happened to my rights? I would never begin to question anyone as to why they choose to have a vaccination or procedure, as this type of decision is a personal decision and none of my business. Who am I to judge any persons choices. It is **not** my place **nor** is it my employers' place to judge me in this manner.

If there is one thing that I learned while growing up it is that I should stand up for what I believed in, and above all stand up for those people that cannot stand up for themselves. What I find sad, is that I now feel like I can no longer stand up for myself, I am no longer strong enough to fight for my rights. I need to work and I want to work. But my rights have been taken away and that is an awful feeling to know that I no longer have control over my medical care and life.

As a patient I have rights to evaluate the medical care/choices of treatments and decide what is best for me and what treatments I am comfortable with. (4) But as an employee I don't have these choices? Next will the Marshfield Clinic require that all patients show proof of vaccination prior to coming to this facility?

I have included the new Marshfield Clinic policy written just this year (1), Additional information from the EEOC (3) (which indicates that my employer should not be able to ask about me what religion I belong too.) **(note on the included Marshfield Clinic religious exemption form also included, page 2 the signature section, (5) by signing this I am giving the Marshfield Clinic the rights to contact anyone they want, regarding my personal spiritual/religious beliefs.) This according to the EEOC is illegal and should be stopped immediately.**

I guess I hope that this committee sees how wrong this is and puts a stop to any employer being allowed to bully an employee into having a medical procedure against their will. Management will begin terminations beginning Dec 9th. (See page 7 of the Marshfield Clinic

Policy (1) for the enforcement. We employees will be questioned in a "sincerity interview" SERIOUSLY ??? Does someone from this committee want to join me for mine? Apparently, the employees are grilled by Panty Haney (attorney), Bruce Cuhna, David Keefe (HR director) and another individual. Seriously?? My god this is so very wrong. When I asked for numbers I was told that NO individual's Religious Exemption has been approved???

How would you as representative react if you were given this ultimatum? You would feel bullied.

I ASK THAT YOU PLEASE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THIS BILL AND IF POSSIBLE SPEED THE PROCESS UP BEFORE ALLOT OF GOOD EMPLOYEES HAVE TO MAKE THIS VERY UNFAIR CHOICE.

I apologize for the length of this statement, but it is very difficult to explain how defeated and ANGRY, I and many others feel regarding this issue.

If you have additional questions for me Representative Theisfeldt has my information if any of you have additional questions.

Thank you for your time. Again... If anyone wishes to join me for my "sincerity Interview" Please let Representative Thiesfeldt know and I will give you the date and time.

Sincerely

J

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: susan bradford <sbradford@plbb.us>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2013 7:30 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Shot

I highly resent being told by my employer that I must have the flu shot in order to retain my employment. I should be able to determine what chemicals I want to put in my body. No one knows what strand of flu will come around and it is a waste of money, and I am not interested in lining the pharmacy companies pocket. Everyone in my family who has gotten the flu shot has become seriously ill after getting it. This is just wrong on so many levels and opens the door to God only knows what else.

Susan Bradford
302 Oak Ridge Drive
Darien, WI 53114
262-882-0055

Timothy James, Registered Physical Therapist, 25 years experience
November 11, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to formally defend my decision to decline the influenza vaccination, and to encourage those of sound mind in a position to regulate such practices as mandating flu vaccines or the wearing of face masks as a punitive measure for refusing same to make such activities illegal. Such policies create oppressive workplace environments. Disturbingly, there is virtual unanimity among healthcare workers about the oppressive nature of their work environment. Many of my peers who didn't want the flu vaccine were afraid to request an exemption for fear of being singled out and fired just for asking. Ironically, there is apparently little room in the medical work world for employees to have and express professional opinions about healthcare issues. This makes for unhappy employees, and that surely compromises the quality of care given to patients.

When healthcare professionals are dictated healthcare policy rather than consulted for their professional opinions about it, there is something seriously wrong with the healthcare industry. The decision to have one's body injected with foreign substances the efficacy of which has not been scientifically demonstrated, while the potential danger of which has been so documented, should be a matter of freedom of choice for those being targeted with flu vaccine mandates. No one has more right to the sanctity of their own body than the individual themselves, and any laws or mandates which deny that reality are simply wrong and need to be expunged. Individuals should not be forcefully subjected at risk of their livelihood and even their life to put themselves in the path of danger by submitting to mandatory flu vaccines by employers or governments acting regardless of the evidence for or against the effectiveness of such vaccines.

Yet that evidence is pretty clear. A study (1) out of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota revealed that, at best, the flu shot has a pathetic 1.5 percent effectiveness rate -- for every 100 people vaccinated with a flu shot, only 1.5 of them will avoid getting the flu. At worst, the flu shot is entirely useless, as the same study showed that about 97 percent of people who do not get a flu shot also do not get the flu. Given a standard margin of error, this study demonstrates no beneficial effect of the flu vaccine at all to those to whom it is administered. As such, there is no medical justification for mandating such vaccines.

My place of employment has recently instigated a mandatory flu vaccine policy complicit with a discriminatory and punitive mandate to wear a mask at all times for refusal of same, or to face termination for non-compliance with either. As a result I must endure the discriminatory wearing of a face mask in my contacts with patients at all times, a mask which interferes with my breathing and my interactions and communications with those patients, while providing no protection from the flu to either them or myself. I have made this decision to refuse the vaccine based on strong moral and ethical convictions that are supported by my religious beliefs, medical research and legal precedent.

Medical research indicates that the efficacy of the influenza vaccination is grossly exaggerated (1). The British Medical Journal has questioned the validity of studies claiming efficacy and stated that "evidence from systemic reviews shows that inactivated vaccines have little or no effect on the effects measured." (2) Another journal has proven influenza vaccinations have not changed the amount of doctor visits or hospitalizations in children (3,4,5), and another shows that vaccinations have not impacted the mortality rate of the elderly population. (6,7) There is also a lack of supporting evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents influenza transmission. (8)

I believe that these vaccinations are providing a false sense of security and therefore putting our patients at risk. An even greater risk exists for those that receive the vaccination. The CDC lists the following as being found in the influenza vaccination: Neomycin, Polymyxin B, formaldehyde or formalin, thimerosal, embryonated chicken eggs, egg albumin, gelatin, Gentamycin, Polyoxyethylene 9-10 Nonyl Phenol (Triton N-101, Octoxynol 9), chick kidney cells and Taurodeoxycholate. (9) Many of these are known carcinogens and detergents that have unknown effects on the human body. Chronic over exposure to antibiotics has also proven to be detrimental to overall health. (10)

Thimerosal has been shown to potentially increase the risk of Alzheimer's Disease, brain damage and nervous system injury. (12,13,14) This is especially alarming to me as my father passed away as a result of Alzheimer's Disease. Package inserts also state that the vaccination/mist "has not been evaluated for carcinogenic or mutagenic potential or its potential to impair fertility." This clearly states then that very little is known about the long-term health effects of receiving this vaccination. There is also no guarantee of protection from influenza or potential temporary or permanent injury or even death as a result of receiving this vaccination.

Some of the potential side effects from the vaccination include anaphylaxis, allergic asthma, redness and discomfort at the injection site, the flu itself, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, vasculitis, body aches, paresthesia, neuropathy, seizure, facial palsy, facial paresis, Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, cough, chills, fever, encephalitis and meningitis, and even death. Furthermore the widespread use of vaccines may play a role in the development of pandemic influenza strains. (11, 18, 19, 25)

Flu rates have been demonstrated to increase by 20% among healthcare facilities mandating flu vaccinations (22). In addition, mandating flu vaccinations can open facilities to retaliatory legal actions for demonstrable injury (21, 22, 25) Lawsuits are already in place challenging not only the mandate of receiving a flu shot but also of forced wearing of masks by those who refuse the vaccine. The mask provision prevents adequate communication between employees and patients, and interferes with workers' rights to "pursue their profession" as part of the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution. In addition, making only some health care employees wear masks violates employees' equal protection rights. (24)

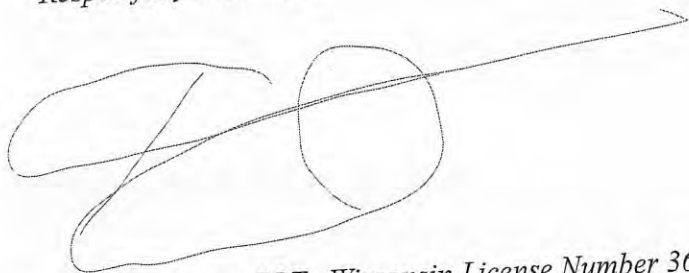
I believe that vaccination is an invasive medical procedure and based on the above, is an experimental procedure. While I support the desire of companies to maintain safety for both patients and staff, I cannot support the use of mandatory vaccinations or forced wearing of masks for refusal of same to achieve this goal. The mandatory administration of this is in direct violation of the Nuremberg Code which states in article 1 that consent should be voluntary and allow for "free power of choice without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion." Article 6 states, "the degree of risk to be taken should never exceed that determined by the humanitarian importance of the problem to be solved by the experiment." And article 9, "During the course of the experiment the human subject should be at liberty to bring the experiment to an end if he has reached the physical or mental state where continuation of the experiment seems to him to be impossible." (15)

As a Christian I believe I am to treat my body with respect as it is a gift from God (see 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 20, The Holy Bible, any version). I believe that destroying life and knowingly injecting myself with toxins is a contradiction to my beliefs and unacceptable. Health is of great importance to me and something that I do not take lightly. I am well informed on health care issues and effective preventive interventions available to deflect and delay illness and injury. I, in company with any reasonable person, am not comfortable with being forced to subject to unproven medical procedures and punitive measures against me for refusing them in light of my better knowledge and my own self preservation interests.

The motivation for mandating flu vaccines is primarily financial. The biggest problem with healthcare is wrongful government intrusion into it. CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) will be deducting 2% of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements to hospitals whose employee flu vaccination rates is less than 90%. This means that the scientific merits (or lack thereof) of flu vaccine policy are irrelevant to hospital administrators. By making this a financial issue, those orchestrating the flu vaccine agenda have managed to keep the medical science off the table, a necessity for pushing flu vaccines given the credible information revealing that flu vaccines don't work and can and do cause permanent disability and death, as confirmed by Cochrane Collaboration reviews (26) and the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (27) respectively.

Making these policies illegal is a chance for the government to take a step in the proper direction and one that is consistent with the Constitution of this nation. I urge you to take action in the best interests of healthcare workers and the patients they care for by making mandatory flu vaccines or retaliatory mask wearing for their refusal on valid grounds illegal in this state.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy James, RPT Wisconsin License Number 3615-024 (See references below.)

- 1 <http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099%2811%2970295-X/abstract> and, Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2006;1.
- 2 BMJ 2006;333:
- 3 Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2008 Oct;162(10):943-51
- 4 Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2008;2.
- 5 Arch Dis Child. 2004 Aug;89(8):734-5.
- 6 Lancet Infect Dis. 2007 Oct;7(10):658-66
- 7 Am J Respir Crit Care Med. 2008 Sep 1;178(5):527-33. Epub 2008 Jun 12.
- 8 Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2010 Feb 17;(2):CD005187
- 9 <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/excipient-table-2.pdf>
- 10 <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2003/06/18/antibiotics-bacteria.aspx>

- 11 Package inserts for FluMist and Fluarix
- 12 Toxicological & Environmental Chemistry. 2009;91(4):735-49.
- 13 Cell Biol Toxicol. 2010 Apr;26(2):143-52. Epub 2009 Apr 9.
- 14 http://drtenpenny.com/should_flu.aspx
- 15 <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/archive/nurcode.html>
- 16 <http://www.westonaprice.org/>
- 17 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2870528/>
- 18 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23969217>
- 19 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acoUUF5Nss&feature=share>
- 20 <http://therefusers.com/refusers-newsroom/osha-argues-against-mandatory-flu-shots-for-hospital-employees/#.UkS1in9oXHs>
- 21 <http://www.kentlaw.iit.edu/news/2012/settlement-flu-vaccine-lawsuit>
- 22 <http://www.wltx.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=103024>
“A few years of concerted efforts to push flu shots only increased the rate among hospital employees from about 60 percent to about 80 percent, said Dr. Rick Foster, vice president of the South Carolina Hospital Association.”
- 23 <http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/safetysecurity/articles/Pages/Wisconsin-Ban-Mandatory-Flu-Shots.aspx>
- 24 <http://www.amednews.com/article/20130114/government/130119979/6/>
- 25 <http://healthimpactnews.com/2013/flu-shot-causes-polio-like-guillain-barre-syndrome-are-rates-higher-than-the-government-admits/>
- 26 <http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation/statisticsreports.html#Stats>
- 27 <http://www.cochrane.org/news/blog/eminence-vs-evidence> Jefferson’s team examined four large cluster randomised trials and one cohort trial of nearly 20,000 healthcare workers. According to their findings (3), the ‘flu vaccine showed “no effect on specific outcomes: laboratory-proven influenza, pneumonia, or deaths from pneumonia”.

November 10, 2013

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt:

Thank you for introducing **AB 247**. I am submitting this testimony anonymously for the upcoming public hearing. As a physician, I was somewhat surprised to see this bill introduced, but equally delighted and I enthusiastically give **testimony in FAVOR** of it. I encourage all legislators, regardless of party affiliation, to **SUPPORT** this bill.

My story is personal. A couple of years ago, a winter day after being on call, I became acutely ill with fever, some chills, fatigue, muscle aches. Sounds like the flu? Right? I never had the flu, never had a flu shot, and didn't want to be forced to get a flu shot in order to go to work. It was my understanding that my employer's policy would have required the flu vaccine for me to return to work if I went to the ER to get treatment. I loved my work and my patients and would gladly wear a mask or use sick time if needed but I didn't want the vaccine. **Vaccines aren't effective or without risks for everyone and I didn't want to get into any disputes with my employer over a personal health decision in order to work.**

Being "under the weather" I just wanted to sleep. I was feeling pretty ill, but I was in general good health. I thought of going in to the ER but a holiday weekend call responsibility was approaching and I thought that I just needed to rest up on my two off days and I really didn't want a flu vaccine. I thought again about going in because I had never felt this bad, and I remember thinking, "I'll get better and I really don't want to get a flu shot."

So, I stayed home, took fluids, acetaminophen (tylenol), slept and on the weekend tried to get a replacement for work but no luck. As one knows, unless one is dead or "half-dead" doctors don't call in sick when on call, so I went to the hospital to work that Sunday morning planning to go to urgent care later. A colleague saw me and arranged for my patient care responsibilities and took me to urgent care. I was immediately referred to the emergency room and on admission to the ER, only < 72 hours after the start of my symptoms, I was already stroking with one-sided numbness and weakness. [It turns out that I was "half-dead," figuratively speaking, of course, as one is either alive or dead.]

I was previously healthy and very diligent about hand washing and infection control procedures in my practice. So, I will never forget my surprise hearing, "Dr _____, you have Staph in your blood and multiple strokes and a large vegetation on your heart valve"... I was too sick to show emotion.

It was Staph sepsis and the bacterial growths on my heart valve which broke off and went to my brain causing the strokes; and not the flu, that almost killed me. Obviously, I made it out of the hospital alive.

It is somewhat ironic, that as sick as I was, I was never was tested for, treated for, or vaccinated against the flu. Even now, as a physician-patient the doctors ask me but do not pressure me to get the flu vaccine. I have not told my doctors the above part of my story. Perhaps, I should have, but it is rather embarrassing as a physician to get sick in the first place, miss the diagnosis, and then not to have gone to the ER sooner. Three strikes,...and I am out of the work I loved; although grateful and glád that I am still alive, even with deficits.

It was, however, the fear of being forced by my employer to have to get a flu shot in order to keep working, (which I clearly wanted to do, and no longer can), that really was the impediment for my seeking earlier care. Without that fear of having to choose between my employment and my personal health preferences to decline a vaccine for a possible illness, earlier diagnosis and treatment of an actual, acute, infective disease with antibiotics may have prevented the septic, embolic strokes which have now left me permanently unable to work.

I thank you and all the legislators for this opportunity to offer testimony and for your and their service to the people of Wisconsin. I strongly encourage all legislators to **vote in favor of AB 247**. Thank you again.

Anonymous.

NB Wisconsin is short one physician when there are already shortages, not to mention the extra taxes I would have paid. I am middle-aged.

11/10/13

19

Dear Jeremy,

My name is ???? and I am a registered nurse in Weston, Wisconsin. I have been employed with the same company for five years. At first, we as health professionals were offered the choice as to whether or not we wanted the flu vaccination. If we declined, it was my employer's policy that we had to wear face masks during the entire flu season. Two years ago, the company I am employed with made it mandatory that all employees have a flu vaccine or they would be terminated, no questions asked.

Please keep in mind that a patient has the right to refuse any vaccine at any time and are not required by anyone to wear a face mask if declined. We cannot under the law, force a patient to receive any vaccine of any kind. It is against their "rights". Why is it then, that a company can mandate that their employees be forced to have something injected into them and do not get a choice. You either receive it or you are fired?!

My company tries to tell us that it is for our protection and for the resident's protection. I find it absurd that patients can refuse this vaccine if it is truly a matter of protecting the masses!

This is a violation of my constitutional rights and I am tired of having NO rights because I chose a profession in Healthcare! Please tell the CDC to give us the proof that these vaccinations are as effective as they say because I am not convinced. There are many countries around us that don't mandate this vaccine because the studies do not show the effectiveness the CDC seems to be able to report.

I am really tired of politicians in this country only care about laws that will benefit them or big business or drug companies. Let's put an end to this now!

Thank you for representing us and helping our voices to be heard. It is a breath of fresh air to actually have a representative who cares about US!

Thank you!

Sincerely,

XXXXX, RN

P.S. please do not share my name if you choose to share this testimony. I am sure that many companies including mine, would "find" some other reason to let us go if they knew we were protesting their policies.

P.S.S. I would never recommend that anyone enter the healthcare field. In this field, the only person who has rights is the patient. Healthcare workers do not have rights. We get kicked, punched, bitten and pushed every day and we are not allowed to defend ourselves in any way nor show any facial expression that any patient may find demeaning or offensive. Now we are forced to inject chemicals into our bodies that we do not want. I don't know of any other country that requires this!!

11/11/13

20

Representative Erik Severson:

(Please do not use my name at this time.)

Currently I am an ED RN working in the mid Wisconsin area for a large facility. My co-workers and I are being forced in to mandatory influenza vaccination for our facility. A majority of the RN's I work with have caved with the pressure of our employer and received the vaccine even though they do not agree with mandatory vaccine policy. The other factor that has kept them from receiving the vaccine in the past is the vaccine is highly ineffective and has dangerous components and side effects.

The facility has many ancillary employees that are also attempting to refuse the vaccine but most have caved due to our employers pressure. We are told as of this next year the facility as a whole (meaning Ministry/Ascension facilities) will not hire individuals who will not receive the influenza vaccine. The facility promotes the vaccine as an effective means of preventing the flu even though studies have proven that handwashing is more effective than the vaccine.

I am continuing to refuse being vaccinated for the influenza. I am a hardworking employee and am healthy, only calling in sick one time in almost 3 years. I have an allergy to the vaccine from an administration in the distant past and refuse to allow my body to be assaulted in the same manner again. My signed declination brought in for the "review board" was filled out by my primary MD by the deadline. The "review board" has decided my declination and medical excuse was not valid and an appeal was required. I made an appeal and have not heard from them as of yet.

I not only have medical reasons for declining the vaccine. I also stand along with those claiming a religious exemption as I believe my body is my temple and only I have the right to say what is introduced into it. This hospital is a religious facility and is denying those with religious reasons an exemption.

If those of us who decline the vaccine continue to do so, we have been notified that we will not receive the general wage increase until we do comply. In the event we decide to leave the facility we will not be allowed back until we comply. Are rights to our health and welfare are being violated with the threats of our lively hood and means of supporting our family are being threatened in order to gain compliance. Investigating this matter has lead me to information that this all ends back at the Obama Care ACA where hospitals are required a 90% compliance rate in order to receive maximum reimbursement from Medicare/Medicaid.

My right and those of my fellow employees are being violated with the threat of no general wage increase and the fear of job loss. The constitutional rights of many are being violated with these tactics and I will not comply but I live in fear of losing my income and profession.

Currently I work for Ministry St. Clare Hospital which is affiliated with Ascencion Health and is nationwide. I believe the whole system is using these tactics to force compliance to mandatory influenza vaccination.

Please protect us from these tactics.

Sincerely,
XXXXX RN BSN

(Please do not use my name.)

11/11/13

To Whom it May Concern in regards to AF247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption)

I am for this bill. I believe it is a persons personal right to choose their health care. NO ONE should be forced to be injected with foreign substances that are toxic to the body in fear of loosing their job. There are side effects of the flu vaccine- just read the package insert. The employer will not take responsibility for the damage done by the vaccine, only the employee will suffer thru that.

The flu vaccine is an experiment we are being forced to be involved in. This is not right! There is also a question of the effectiveness of the vaccine. Why force the risk on people when it has such a poor track record?

I do not believe employers have the right or should be given the right to dictate my health care.

Sincerely,
(name withheld)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: LAT <latatnall@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 7:29 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

I am a wife, mother and Registered Nurse who is against any and all vaccinations. Vaccines have affected me personally and professionally. I have had severe reactions to vaccinations when I was a child and once as an adult.

As an adult, I had one flu shot. I was sick and in bed, suffering for three months after receiving the shot that I was assured was necessary and good for me. Ever since that flu shot in 1995, I have been plagued with multiple allergies, a depressed immune system and increased migraines. I also go through periods of dizzy spells that last for one to two weeks (never had that before the flu vaccination). These spells still happen at least once a year. I feel that I got off lucky with these horrible side effects. There are many others that suffer long lasting neurological problems (dystonia, narcolepsy, other horrific health problems and even death from these vaccines.

As a mother to three children, I am very fortunate to have learned how dangerous vaccines are before I had all of my children vaccinated according to the schedule. My oldest had three rounds of childhood vaccines. I always wondered why he was so sick. Once I stopped getting him immunized, his health improved. My two youngest children did not get any vaccinations. They are the healthiest children you will ever meet. They typically receive perfect attendance at school because they never get ill like their peers. I have utilized the exemption forms for the state of Wisconsin to prevent my children from having to go through the suffering I have gone through. My daughter is now 20, and she teaches her friends and their families about the vaccination lies. I am proud that she is able to do her own research on the harm vaccines are doing to people and isn't afraid to share it.

As a professional in the medical field, mandatory vaccinations at most health care facilities affect me greatly. With my allergies and adverse reactions, I cannot have a flu shot or any other vaccine. The majority of my co workers blindly accept the flu shot without understanding the long term consequences. As with anything one puts into their body, it should be by choice. No one should be required to be injected with toxins that cause cancer, illness and long term health problems. Below I have listed some of the ingredients in a typical flu shot or vaccine. Would you want any of these in your body?

VACCINES **

1. FLUZONE by Sanofi Pasteur ([FDA link](#))



**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Octylphenol Ethoxylate: Immunotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

2. FLUVIRIN by Novartis ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Beta-Propiolactone: Carcinogen
Nonylphenol Ethoxylate: Immunotoxin
Neomycin: Immunotoxin
Polymyxin: Neurotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

3. FLUMIST by MedImmune, LLC ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Dibasic Potassium Phosphate: Immunotoxin
Gentamicin Sulfate: Nephrotoxic
Monobasic Potassium Phosphate: Immunotoxin
Monosodium Glutamate: Neurotoxin

4. FLULAVAL by GlaxoSmithKline ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Sodium Deoxycholate: Immunotoxin
Thimerosal: Neurotoxin

5. FLUARIX by GlaxoSmithKline ([FDA link](#))

**** Toxic Ingredients ****

Formaldehyde: Carcinogen
Gentamicin Sulfate: Nephrotoxic
Hydrocortisone: Myelin Degenerator
Octoxynol 10: Immunotoxin
Polysorbate 80: Sterile Agent
Sodium Deoxycholate: Immunotoxin

People need a choice. No employer should be able to force these harmful substances into an employee's body for any reason. Those that want to opt out should be able to opt out. There should be no negative consequence for declining any immunization. I will continue to lobby for choice. I beg of you - please pass AB247 for

everyones' health.

Thank you for your time,
Leigh Ann Tatnall, RN

Sent from my iPad

Matthews, Meagan

From: Mercedes Borchardt <mercedes.borchardt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 11:23 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccination Exemption Bill
Attachments: Influenza Vaccine Bill.docx; flu exemption.docx

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I have been meaning to write to you since I read an article about your work on the influenza vaccine exemption bill back in May. I heard about a committee hearing on this bill tomorrow. I regret that I am unable to attend the hearing, but I do wish you would read my personal testimony and present it on my behalf. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help.

Attached you will find my personal testimony on how the mandation has effected me and a letter I wrote to my employer when my request for exemption was denied.

Sincerely,
Mercedes Borchardt
414-232-5717

November 12, 2013

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt and Committee,

I am an employee of Aurora Health Care. In 2011, Aurora implemented a mandatory flu vaccination policy. This meant that all employees had to receive the flu vaccination by a deadline of December 31, 2011, or face "voluntary termination". Word of this policy created panic in the work environment. Many employees did not want to get the vaccination but also did not want to lose their jobs, especially during the holiday time and a recession. One of my coworkers started a petition to refuse the vaccination. That petition however was quickly confiscated and the employee reprimanded. While Aurora mandated the flu vaccination, they did also offer an exemption for those who did not or could not take the vaccine. This however was not as easily obtained as it may seem. The requirements for a medical exemption were very specific and few qualified, including me. So I completed the form for the religious exemption and submitted it by the required deadline. To my dismay, my exemption request was denied. I attempted to appeal this decision over the phone and I was told my reason "did not fit the criteria for a religious exemption". I argued their decision and again submitted a more detailed reason for my request, stating that I had prayed about this dilemma and truly felt that I could not take the vaccine. I was denied a second and third time. I was told to put in my resignation so that my personal time off would be paid out to me. This response I received was very upsetting; it caused much personal anguish and stress. I did not want to get the vaccine but I also did not want to risk my job by not complying with Aurora's mandation. After my exemption request was denied and it appeared that the decision would not be overturned, I turned to my manager and Chief Nursing Supervisor for help. I was told by them "this decision has been made by people higher up than us, we hope that you will change your mind, but if not, we will miss you." It was not until after I submitted a letter in writing (see attached) to the Vice President/Patient Safety Officer and Vice President of Care Management that my exemption was finally accepted (on December 30, 2011). I am now exempt from getting the flu vaccination; however I must resubmit my request by the required deadline each year. Aurora employs around 30,000 people. I am unsure of the number that filed for exemption, but I have been told I was 1 of 19 that was accepted.

I feel very strongly about the mandation of the flu vaccination. I believe it is against our Constitutional Rights and that this Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill should be made a law. No employer should have the ability to force its employees to take a vaccine. Each year my heart goes out to my fellow coworkers who themselves do not want the vaccine, but feel they do not have any other choice. Some have even suffered adverse reactions to the vaccine. Please pass this bill for myself and all of the other health care workers whose rights are violated by this mandation. You can find some helpful facts on the influenza vaccine and others in Vaccine Safety Manual for Concerned Families and Health Care Practitioners by Neil Z Miller. I urge you to read the facts and listen to our testimonies. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mercedes Borchardt

December 28, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

I do not wish to terminate my employment with Aurora Health Care, however receiving the flu vaccine is against my religious beliefs and I cannot bring myself to receive the vaccine in any form (including Flu Mist or Preservative-Free).

I filed for religious exemption on September 30, 2011 originally stating, that my body is a temple of the Lord and I do not want to put anything in my body that could cause harm or illness. This reason was denied in a letter that I received on December 8, 2011 which stated, *in part* that the information I provided was insufficient to establish my eligibility for a religious-based exemption.

I have requested and been denied a religious exemption, and I wish to stress again, I do not wish to voluntarily terminate my employment with Aurora Health Care. But in following the natural law God ordained, it is my religious belief that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. This is a tenet of my religion. As such I believe I am forbidden from introducing unclean, unknown and/or poisons into my body. Since the body is God's Temple, I cannot pollute it. I believe that taking the Flu vaccine violates this tenet of my religion.

I have prayed and put this matter of flu vaccination before God and truly believe that I am not supposed to put it in my body. As directed in a letter dated December 1, 2011, I explained this to Rhonda Taylor Parris during our phone conversation and the reasons she gave me for my exemption denial was that I have received other vaccinations and that I take Ibuprofen and vitamins. The vaccines I have received were childhood vaccines, which were the choice of my parents. Vaccinations do not give permanent immunity. They only delay mild childhood diseases such as measles into adulthood when they become killer diseases. God knows better. I do take ibuprofen and vitamins occasionally, but that is not the issue at hand and I am not morally against them. I am however against vaccination and believe that the practice of vaccination introduces pollutants and unclean residues into my body.

When I was not granted an exemption, I was dismayed. Since I do not wish to voluntarily terminate my employment, I carefully reviewed Aurora's Influenza Immunization Policy (No. 197)(5/11):

Failure to comply with the immunization policy will result in written warning. If an individual is not vaccinated or granted an exemption within two (2) weeks of the warning, they will be subject to further corrective action up to termination of employment.

See -- Aurora's Influenza Immunization Policy (No. 197) section IV. B. E.

I cannot take the flu vaccine due to my religious beliefs. I do not want to terminate my employment with Aurora. If by not getting the flu vaccine I am terminated, this will be the most extreme form of adverse corrective action; Policy #197 describes "termination" not "voluntary termination." Termination for my religious-based refusal to receive the Flu vaccination will be **involuntary and punitive**. Further, it appears that the adverse personnel action discussed in recent letters and memos will be in breach of Aurora's stated policy

(Policy # 197) since I am offered no other correction action and no accommodation has been presented by management.

I am again requesting an exemption or some other form of accommodation that will allow me to continue my employment with Aurora in my present position.

I firmly subscribe to Aurora's purpose – "we help people live well." And, I certainly understand the need to protect our patients from harm. I do and will continue to perform my job in a manner that protects our patients, my co-workers, and the entire Aurora family. I entered my profession with the firm commitment to offer the best possible nursing care. I am dedicated to continue to perform my duties so my patients will be assured of respect for and attention to their health concerns. By refusing to introduce the Flu vaccine into my body – which I believe to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit – in no way detracts from my devotion or ability to faithfully fulfill my nursing responsibilities. To be forced to violate one of the major tenets of my religion unfairly places me in a personal dilemma.

I wish to restate my position so it is clear: I am opposed to vaccinations for religious reasons. I do not resign from my position and any termination or corrective actions that results from me not receiving the vaccine will be punitive, not voluntary.

Sincerely,

Mercedes Borchardt

414-232-5717

mercedes.borchardt@gmail.com

11/12/13

(24)

Dear Sir,

I would like to remain anonymous. I am writing to tell you my story. I have to get the flu shot as a term of employment. I have worked for ProHealth Care for 10 years. I don't think it is fair. I am a nursing mother of an infant less than 6 months of age, and the entire package insert states "It is not known whether this vaccine is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when this vaccine is administered to a nursing mother."

I feel it should be my choice whether I want to feed this medication to my infant via breast milk. My patients have a choice to refuse vaccines. Do you think once they administer this vaccine, I am now their patient? Where are my rights? Please Help!

XXXXXXXXXX, RN

25

Matthews, Meagan

From: John <jkinning@frontier.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:28 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am contacting you to show support for AB247. I have been in health care for over 20 years and never have I had to have the flu shot. I have never had the influenza, and being a health care professional and having cared for thousands of people the most important thing to do in prevention is washing hands. Herd inoculation has been proven ineffective as viruses do mutate, hence the CDC choice influenza vaccines is only 40-50% effective, in young healthy adults it should remain a choice not a requirement by law.

I am currently employed by a large North Central Wisconsin hospital who up until this year did not mandate this massive intrusion into my personal life/ body. I am a Christian and currently trying to get a religious waiver. This is a lengthy process with more intrusive questions to be answered.

One of the hurdles of the proposed bill is the large number of major companies that oppose it. Correct me if I am wrong but government is for the people and by the people, not large corp, and PACS. I support your efforts 100% and will do as much as I can to garner even more support.

--
John Kinning

11/12/13

(26)

I am a nurse who was forced to get a flu shot and would have been fired by October 31. This is the first time I have gotten the flu shot. Seventeen days after that shot I got pneumonia. I have NEVER had any lung infections in the past. In the CDC information they say you can be more likely to get pneumonia after the shot.

The flu shot is suppose to protect against 3 strains of flu-ONLY 3! There are hundreds of other bacteria and viruses we could get sick from. If the healthcare system is interested in protecting patients, all healthcare workers should wear a mask all winter. The efficacy of the flu shot is between 50-65%. And that is if you are exposed to 1 of the 3 strains in the shot. Many years the strains in the shot are NOT are the strains that are going around that year. (The CDC makes a **guess** as to which strains to use each year.) When looking at these numbers, how can they require these bogus shots.

My other issue is that we don't know what long term affects the flu shot will have on us. AsI found out, I am more susceptible to pneumonia with the flu shot. But what about Alzheimers and other long term diseases.

I am only 1 of thousands of healthcare workers who object to the required flu shots.

Please pass this bill to protect our healthcare worker.

Thank you, XXXXXXXXX

11/12/13

next
8 pages

Representative Thiesfeldt,
attached is my letter speaking on why we need a bill to protect our employment in regards to the flu shot as well as some of the forms that my company is forcing us to sign if we do decline. Please add my STRONG, PASSIONATE support for this bill!!! If possible please dont use the name of my hospital, but feel free to use my name. While i am risking termination, this is too important to let go.

thanks for your help in this!!!
Respectfully,
XXXXXX (Rep. Thiesfeldt omitted it just in case.)

11/12/13

Representative Thiesfeldt,

First, thank you for supporting the workers of this state and addressing the freedom of choice as to what we put in our bodies! At one time this would have seemed a pointless comment, but in today's age, it is one of our most important and personal freedoms!

I am writing this in lieu of speaking in person, only for the anonymity that it provides. My heart and passion to speak in the public hearing cry out, yet my need to remain employed has to override my heart and passion. You see, I am an IT worker for several hospitals and clinics in and around Green Bay. I have ZERO patient contact and Rarely am required to enter either the hospitals or clinics. Yet by company policy I am required to get a flu shot.

As companies go, mine has been more accommodating than others that I have heard of, but that accommodation has been slowly lessening over the last several years. Originally, when my hospital started requiring the flu shot, they allowed anyone to just opt out. No form, no letters, you just don't have to get it if you don't want to. I of course didn't get it. Last year, same policy only now you had to sign a declination form (see attachment 1) that said I decline and acknowledge that by doing so I was endangering my health and those of my coworkers, family and my community. Talk about a heavy burden. This year they provided a similar option for employees with one MAJOR exception (attachment 2). This year in order to decline, the employee had to have the signature of either a doctor stating you were allergic or from your "spiritual leader" saying it was a violation of a MAJOR part of your religion and by getting the shot it would violate your religion. This effectively took away our rights as citizens to refuse the shot. I was able to find a leader who would sign; however, I have several people in my immediate area that were unable or unwilling to find someone that would sign. This basically took their right to refuse and gave it to someone that they may or may not agree with on the subject. Additionally, the person that would sign would also be acknowledging that refusing the flu shot was endangering family, coworkers and the community. This has got to stop.

As to why I am refusing the shot. There are actually several reasons;

1. It's my right to put only what I choose into my body. This is literally our last bastion of freedom. It's our only freedom that is so personal that if the government or our employer can dictate what we have to put in our bodies, we are no longer a free person. Regardless of what the benefits to society are, it should be our choice. When the needs of the many become the reason for doing something to the individual, we have lost our freedom.

2. The effectiveness of the shot it's self. (See attached article from John Hopkins Peter Doshi, PHD Interview with Doc Doshi Attachment 3). Dr. Doshi says "The vaccine may be less beneficial and less safe than has been claimed and the threat of influenza seems to be overstated". Even the CDC acknowledges that the studies finding any reduction in death rates may be do the "healthy-user effect" In other words; people that get the flu shot are typically healthier than those that do not skewing the results. Also from the interview - "For most people, and possibly most doctors, officials need only claim that vaccines save lives, and it is assumed there must be solid research behind it," says Doshi. Unfortunately, that's not the case, he says. A study of thousands done by the Cochrane group found

that it offered zero protection against what the CDC is saying it protects us from. A separate study released in February shows that the flu shot is only 9% effective for seniors and offers no protection for children. Which leads to the safety.

3. The safety of the shot. According to Dr. Richard Blaylock the "vaccine is Not safe". The multi dose flu shot has a preservative that contains mercury in it. Mercury is "toxic to the brain" says Dr. Blaylock. He continues "the flu vaccines don't prevent the flu but actually increase the odds of getting it. The Mercury contained in the vaccines is such a strong immune depressant that the flu shot suppresses the immunity for several weeks." Another study I have found concluded that the flu shot taken over a 3-5 year period increased the risk of Alzheimer's by 10 times! Scary how we have seen such steep increases in Alzheimer's and Autism over the last decade. Funny how the studies on these diseases claim an increase in mercury in the brain... coincident? I don't think so and this is one of the primary reasons I refuse and will continue to refuse even at the cost of my job. Think of the ramifications of this. We know mercury is an issue; our hospital has made a HUGE deal of it when we finally removed all mercury thermometers! And yet they feel its ok to inject the same mercury into our blood! It makes ZERO sense!


In closing, while I personally will refuse to take the flu shot, if someone else chooses to, that is their choice, who am I to force my beliefs on someone else. I have presented the info I have studied to others in my area of work and this year 7 of 14 refused to get the shot based on the info I presented and what they found on their own. However, of the 7, only 3 were able to get someone else to "approve" their refusal. That means 4 of my friends and coworkers were injected with something they disapproved of, and were forced to get the shot for the sole reason of keeping their job. It's great my company offers a way to decline; however, I feel it's even more despicable because "officially" they offer this to their employees and it looks all wonderful to the outside, but the reality is they have made it even worse for those that choose to refuse the shot. These people are in my opinion literally "taking one for their families (team)" and in the process potentially slowly killing themselves.

Above all you may believe what the shot does or doesn't do, what it contains or doesn't contain, this should be left to the individual to decide and it shouldn't be a decision based on coercion. The person looking to decide what is best for him/her should weigh the benefits of the shot over the side effects, NOT whether or not that decision will cost them a job! By making our jobs a "benefit" of getting the shot, in today's economy, most will have to get the shot regardless of whether or not they think it will work. That is the WRONG reason to get it.

Declination of Influenza Vaccination 2012-2013

My employer, _____, as a member of Hospital _____ has requested that I receive the seasonal influenza vaccination in order to protect myself, my coworkers and the patients we serve.

I acknowledge that I am aware of the following facts:

- 
- Hospitalizations in the U.S., due to the flu, number in the hundreds of thousands and deaths number in the tens of thousands according to the CDC.
 - Influenza vaccination is recommended for me and all other healthcare workers to prevent influenza disease and its complications, including death.
 - If I contract influenza, I will shed the virus for 24--48 hours **before** influenza symptoms appear. My shedding the virus can spread influenza infection to patients in this facility.
 - If I become infected with influenza, even when my symptoms are mild, I can spread severe illness to others.
 - I understand that the strains of virus that cause influenza infection change almost every year, which is why a different influenza vaccine is recommended each year.
 - I cannot get the influenza disease from the influenza vaccine.
 - The consequences of my refusing to be vaccinated could endanger my health and the health of those with whom I have contact, including:
 - Patients in this healthcare setting
 - My coworkers
 - My family
 - My community

Despite these facts, I am choosing to decline influenza vaccination at present time.

Please choose **one** of the following reasons:

I am declining the influenza immunization (please circle reason below):

1. Allergies to Eggs or Vaccines
2. Do not like Shots
3. Flu Shot does not work
4. History of Guillain-Barre
5. Personal Choice
6. Pregnancy
7. Previous Reaction
8. Religious Reasons
9. Side-Effect Concerns

I understand that I will be required to wear a mask, while working, if I am not vaccinated during a period of influenza activity as defined by policy and determined by the local system.

I have read and fully understand the information on this declination form.

Signature: _____

Name (print): _____ Department: _____ ID Badge # _____

Name (print) of individual accepting declination: _____ ID Badge # _____

FLU / declination / 2012-2013 revised 8/20/12 JR

(copied from <http://www.newsmaxhealth.com/Headline/influenza-virus-flu-vaccine-Peter-Doshi-Ph-D-/2013/05/16/id/504942> for your convenience)

Johns Hopkins Scientist Slams Flu Vaccine

Thursday, 16 May 2013 06:33 PM
By Sylvia Booth Hubbard

A Johns Hopkins scientist has issued a blistering report on influenza vaccines in the British Medical Journal (BMJ). Peter Doshi, Ph.D., charges that although the vaccines are being pushed on the public in unprecedented numbers, they are less effective and cause more side effects than alleged by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Further, says Doshi, the studies that underlie the CDC's policy of encouraging most people to get a yearly flu shot are often low quality studies that do not substantiate the official claims.

Promoting influenza vaccines is one of the most visible and aggressive public health policies in the United States, says Doshi of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Drug companies and public officials press for widespread vaccination each fall, offering vaccinations in drugstores and supermarkets. The results have been phenomenal. Only 20 years ago, 32 million doses of influenza vaccine were available in the United States on an annual basis. Today, the total has skyrocketed to 135 million doses.

"The vaccine may be less beneficial and less safe than has been claimed, and the threat of influenza seems to be overstated," Doshi says. Mandatory vaccination policies have been enacted, often in healthcare facilities, forcing some people to take the vaccine under threat of losing their jobs.

The main assertion of the CDC that fuels the push for flu vaccines each year is that influenza comes with a risk of serious complications which can cause death, especially in senior citizens and those suffering from chronic illnesses. That's not the case, said Doshi.

When read carefully, the CDC acknowledges that studies finding any perceived reduction in death rates may be due to the "healthy-user effect" — the tendency for healthier people to be vaccinated more than less-healthy people. The only randomized trial of influenza vaccine in older people found no decrease in deaths. "This means that influenza vaccines are approved for use in older people despite any clinical trials demonstrating a reduction in serious outcomes," says Doshi.

Even when the vaccine is closely matched to the type of influenza that's prevalent, which doesn't happen every year, randomized, controlled trials of healthy adults found that vaccinating between 33 and 100 people resulted in one less case of influenza. In addition, says Doshi, no evidence exists to show that this reduction in the risk of influenza for a specific population — here in the United States, among healthy adults, for example — extrapolates into any reduced risk of serious complications from influenza, such as hospitalizations or deaths, among seniors.

"For most people, and possibly most doctors, officials need only claim that vaccines save lives, and it is assumed there must be solid research behind it," says Doshi. Unfortunately, that's not the case, he says.

Although the CDC implies that flu vaccines are safe and there's no need to weigh benefits against risk, Doshi disagrees. He points to an Australian study that found one in every 110 children under the age of five had convulsions following vaccinations in 2009 for H1N1 influenza. Additional investigations found that the H1N1 vaccine was also associated with a spike in cases of narcolepsy among adolescents.

Doshi's concerns echo those of Dr. Russell Blaylock, a neurosurgeon and author of "The Blaylock Wellness Report" who has deep concerns over the safety and efficacy of the flu vaccine.

Not only is the vaccine not safe, Dr. Blaylock tells Newsmax Health, it doesn't even work. "The vaccine is completely worthless, and the government knows it," he says. "There are three reasons the government tells the elderly why they should get flu shots: secondary pneumonia, hospitalization, and death. Yet a study by the Cochrane group studied hundreds of thousands of people and found it offered zero protection for those three things in the general community. It offered people in nursing homes some immunity against the flu — at best one-third — but that was only if they picked the right vaccine."

A study released in February found that the flu shot was only 9 percent effective in protecting seniors against the 2012-2013 season's most virulent influenza bug.

What's even worse is that small children who are given the flu vaccine get no protection from the disease. "The government also says that every baby over the age of six months should have a vaccine, and they know it contains a dose of mercury that is toxic to the brain," says Dr. Blaylock. "They also know the studies have shown that the flu vaccine has zero — zero — effectiveness in children under five."

For most people, says Dr. Blaylock, flu vaccines don't prevent the flu but actually increase the odds of getting it. The mercury contained in vaccines is such a strong immune depressant that a flu shot suppresses immunity for several weeks. "This makes people highly susceptible to catching the flu," he says. "They may even think the vaccine gave them the flu, but that's not true — it depressed their immune system and then they caught the flu."

Mercury overstimulates the brain for several years, says Dr. Blaylock, and that activation is the cause of Alzheimer's and other degenerative diseases. One study found that those who get the flu vaccine for three to five years increase their risk of Alzheimer's disease 10-fold.

Doshi asserts that influenza is a case of "disease mongering" in an effort to expand markets. He points to the fact that deaths from flu declined sharply during the middle of the 20th century, long before the huge vaccine campaigns that kicked off the 21st century.

Why do drug companies push the flu vaccine? "It's all about money," says Dr. Blaylock. "Vaccines are a pharmaceutical company's dream. They have a product that both the government and the media will help them sell, and since vaccines are protected, they can't be sued if anyone has a complication."

Doshi's article "is a breath of fresh air," says Dr. Blaylock. "This article exposes in well-defined and articulate terms what has been known for a long time — the flu vaccine promotion is a fraud.

"Here's the bottom line," says Dr. Blaylock. "The vast number of people who get the flu vaccine aren't going to get any benefit, but they get all of the risks and complications."

11/12/13

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I am so happy to see that a hearing has been scheduled to address AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill)! I strongly support this bill and although I cannot appear in person, I would like to share my testimony for you to submit on my behalf. I would appreciate it if you would withhold my name in connection with this statement as I am currently attempting to obtain a vaccine exemption at my place of employment and do not want to **jeopardize** my chances. Thank you for working on behalf of health care workers across Wisconsin!

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX

November 11, 2013

To the Assembly Committee on Health,

I have worked as a licensed practical nurse for 37 years. I am presently employed at a small, rural clinic in western Wisconsin. Last February my employer sent out a facility wide email stating that anyone not receiving the influenza vaccine by November 1, 2013 would be terminated. It came as quite a shock to many of us that our employer would go to this extreme in obtaining flu shot compliance and even more shocking, that this was even legal. Our CEO stated that this new policy was being announced early enough in the year so that anyone who wanted would have the time to obtain other employment. This was like a slap in the face to those of us who have spent our whole career serving others. I immediately began searching for a new job, but between living in a rural area and the slowing down of the economy, I have not been able to find other work. I have also been subject to varying comments from co workers and management alike, criticizing my opinion on the flu vaccine.

I have had to put up with statements at my job such as:

- You deserve to be fired (from a co worker).
- Don't think you can get a job anywhere else. Everyone is doing this (from my supervisor)
- Those religious nuts and their anti flu vaccine beliefs are driving me nuts (from a provider)
- You can always quit your job and go work someplace else if you don't want the vaccine (from our CEO)
- I have yet to see a religion that prohibits flu vaccines (from our human resources director)

Not only is my right to make my own health care choices being denied, but I am being subjected to statements and accusations that nobody should have to put up with in the workplace. Is this really what being a citizen of the United States means? That only a select group has the right to exercise their freedom? Why is it against the law for the government to force an individual to receive unwanted interference in their health care, but it is legal for an employer to do so?

My research this past summer has shown that the efficacy of the flu vaccine is mediocre at best. While the medical community does not want it publicized, seeing as it is generally

considered safe, there are instances of an individual being stricken with serious side effects as a result of this vaccine. What about those of us not willing to take that risk?

As a nurse, my license and job would be taken from me if I forced a patient to accept any type of treatment that went against their wishes. I ask that you allow healthcare workers to be given the same respect in regards to deciding whether they will receive the flu vaccine.

As of today, I am waiting to hear if I can be exempted from taking the vaccine based on a "sincerely held personal belief". This exemption will only be granted if I can supply a letter from my clergy and pass an intense interrogation from members of a board chosen by my administration. If I am not granted this exemption I will have the choice of either receiving the vaccine against my will, or being terminated.

I ask that you vote in favor of this bill and protect the rights of health care workers across the state. We are citizens and individuals just like anyone else and deserve to be given the freedom to direct our own health care decisions. No one should have to choose between a vaccine and their job.

Thank you for your time.

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: Liz Schreck <justracing20@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:26 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Re: AB 247 (Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill) Public Hearing Scheduled

I would like this letter to be considered for the fight against requirement for flu shot. I am totally against forcing someone to get a flu shot & they have your back against the wall when they say "it's the shot or your job." I have never had the flu shot & it has always been my choice. I work in the airline industry for 19yrs without getting it. Why do I want a virus in me???? I don't. Even reading about how many strains of the flu there are, there's no guarantee I won't get it even with the shot. This should be a personal choice. Please stop this madness. I have seen many of my coworkers with sad faces because they didn't have a choice.

11/11/13

I am employed by a healthcare facility which requires the flu vaccine for employment. I have worked for this company for over 20 years and never had the flu shot until it was forced upon me two years ago. The first year I received two threatening letters from my employer after requesting an exemption. I ended up taking the flu shot in order to keep my job.

After receiving an allergy test, I discovered I am allergic to one of the ingredients in the flu shot. Each time I receive the flu shot I have acquired uncomfortable side effects including headaches, dizziness and nausea. But, unless one has a life threatening condition that requires emergency medical attention you do not qualify for exemption. So, I guess to qualify you would need to die first.

I understand the reason for encouraging employees to take the vaccine, but I disagree with the policy that requires me to take it for fear of losing my job.

I also object to putting formaldehyde and other objectionable ingredients into my body, unless it would be needed for a disease I am known to be suffering from.

In addition, I have no direct patient contact, and I work from home, so it would seem the flu shot mandate would not be necessary for my employment.

Anonymous

(31)

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: I foster <lfoster@goldenyearsofwalworth.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Bill AB 247

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,
While I am living in Wisconsin district 32, I still want to let you know that I support you and the other representatives in regards to bill 247. You are spot on in your reasoning. Many of my colleagues in the field of healthcare will disagree with sound reasoning, but there are many who are voicing exactly what this bill stands for. My prayer is that this bill will pass. I thank you and those in the assembly who are making a stand on this over inflated issue.

Sincerely,
Laura Foster RN-ADON
lfoster@goldenyearsofwalworth.com
Golden Years of Walworth
270 Ridge Road
Walworth WI, 53184
262-394-1716

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: drbrandon@fletcher-chiropractic.com
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:50 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: My Forced Vaccination

Dear state representative Thiesfeldt,

My name is Dr. Brandon Fletcher. I am a chiropractor in the Oshkosh community. I was recently forced out of Aurora insurance due to refusing to take the Flu vaccine. Even with providing their review board with adequate information about the flu vaccine and personal feelings. I was still denied and can no longer treat patients as a "in network doctor." Forcing those patients to pay higher premiums for no clinical reason. I'm not giving my patients any less care because of my lack of vaccination.

Aurora is trying to dictate how I practice as a clinician. They have instilled fear in their own workers by threatening with loss of job if they do not get vaccinated by a certain time. Till then Aurora is forcing their employees to wear masks with stickers that say "I'm not vaccinated". I have friends and family that work for this Hospital, so this is not speculation.

My larger fear about this forced vaccination is not the flu. It is what is next? Why not force us all to get the HPV vaccine or Shingles. It is a loss of personal choice and freedom. What is worse if the research from around the world shows that the flu vaccine is minimally effective with minimal change on the death toll. This is not small pox or some major plague that is killing uncontrollably. This is is the Flu and it will come every year with a new strain and design. We as a society should understand, that we can not control the flu and forcing people to think we can, is a joke.

Overall I support you on your way to Madison. If you need any more information please let me know.

-Brandon Fletcher D.C.

1/2 (33)

Matthews, Meagan

From: ZombieTaunTaun <zombietauntaun@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:01 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: responding to your email about the vaccination and would like this read.

To Whom it may concern:

I worked at the Dunn County Health Care Center as a nurse's aide for the past 24 years in that 24 years I was never in trouble for anything. 2 years ago the facility I worked at wanted us to get a flu shot or you were mandated to wear a mask. The first year I wore the mask from December until the first part of June. This past year I wore the mask from December to the weekend before Memorial weekend. The one thing you have to understand, I work in a facility that the average temperature of the building is 85-90 degrees depending in what part of the building you are working at. In April I had went home from heat exhaustion from the heat, but also from wearing the mask for almost 7 hours straight. We are not allowed to take the mask off only at break times. So I decided after talking to the state people on the phone who in part said that that "the State does not mandate facilities to get the flu shot nor do they mandate people to wear a mask". It is up to the facility to decide that. And also I checked the CDC website that said that the flu was done in our area as of May 18th. With both of those factors in place I decided to no longer wear the mask. I was told by nurse in charge to wear it. I politely told her no and why I would not.

The following week I was brought into my Director of Nurses office and was told by her and the Adminstrator to leave, I assumed I was fired, but later found out I was put on Administration leave. I was not called for almost 3 weeks and when I went in to plead my case I was treated disrespectfully and then the next day was fired through a letter in the mail.

I worked with girls where the DON would make remarks such as "are you ready to get the shot yet" I was given dirty looks from the DON when I would have the mask just below my nose so I could get a little fresh air and there were no residents in my proximity. I would be in the nurses office with my mask down, and was given a dirty look and told "we don't do that." This is also the same woman who told me that after I talked to her about having heat exhaustion that I could go in a residents room as long as it was empty or the stairwell and take my mask off to get some air. Well working in a nursing home there is not enough time in the day to do what she suggested and after talking to the State people, had I been caught by a State person I would be in big trouble if caught with my mask down. So I was screwed either way.

I am all for protecting the residents that I worked with, but what about the safety of the people who are required to get a shot just so they can keep their job? If I get cancer from this stupid shot will they provide my children with a mom and a wife for my husband? Will they take care of my family financially, probably not! They have not proven to me that the shot is even safe, nor that it is 100% effective. I am a intelligent woman and have done my research on vaccinations and from my findings they are not safe nor do they provide the protection for the elderly that I have taken care of.

In closing, I loved the residents that I provided care for, but after losing my job I had to reevaluate whether I wanted to be put in the position again of being forced to wear a mask for 6 months of the year or get the shot. I was good at what I did, but I just couldn't go through the headache of this again.

We live in America where it is increasingly becoming a society that cares only for the mighty dollar, that the government feels the need to take care of us whether we want it to or not and infringing upon the rights of individual people whether it makes sense or not, just so the government can fill its pockets with money. The flu shot is not about protection it is all about money.

Sincerely,

2/2

Kelly Pember

I have to work that day otherwise I would be down there speaking..best wishes to you and thank you for taking up the fight and it is a fight!

Matthews, Meagan

From: Lynn Hutchinson <glhutch@live.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 9:17 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB247

Hello Representative Thiesfeldt. Although I do not reside within your district, I hope you do not mind hearing from me as I am in the 69th and am without representation until after the upcoming election. It is my understanding that AB247 is currently under consideration and you are a co-sponser. I would like to express support for the legislation as does my wife. We are both full time employees of the Marshfield Clinic with 27 years for me and 15 years for her. As you probably know, the clinic is requiring all employees to receive the annual flu vaccine or face termination. Neither of us are the least bit comfortable with either the effectiveness or safety of the vaccine and would never decide on our own to be vaccinated. As a result, we face the loss of both of our full time jobs or agree to vaccination. We of course would like you to pass along our concerns to the assembly and lend our support to you and the other Representatives who are working to pass AB247. Thank you.

(35)

Matthews, Meagan

From: rebekah petrie <beck_peachtree@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 8:48 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory Vaccine exeption bill

Hello,
I am writing to give testimony to the mandatory vaccine exemption bill.
My name is Rebekah Tank, On October 31, 2012, I was 6 month pregnant and lost my job and my family's health insurance because I refused to take the mandatory flu vaccine. I was denied personal, medical, and religious exemption. I was told I had no proof that the vaccine would harm me or my baby even though the insert with the shot said " not proven safe or effective for pregnant or nursing mothers. " My family and I fought very hard to find a way around this. We heard alot of support for what we were trying to do, but in the end we ran out of time and I lost my job. Nobody should have to chose keeping their job over protecting their baby. Agnesian Healthcare made it VERY clear they did not care about my what happened to my baby as long as I took the vaccine! That's WRONG! I hope this help's end this madness.
Thank you for giving us a voice on this subject.
Sincerely, Rebekah Tank

11/13

(36)

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

As I am unable to attend the hearing for AB247 in person, I would ask that you intercede for myself, and other health care workers who have a personal interest in this bill. For obvious reasons, being risk of losing my job, I request to remain anonymous. I am in the process of attempting a Religious exemption, based on my beliefs, but have minimal confidence in it being granted.

If a copy of my clinic's **Immunization of Clinic Workers** policy, or email "warnings about non-compliance" would be helpful, please send me a fax number to send it to. Thank you.

To whom it may concern:

As I am unable to attend the public hearing for AB 247, I wish to have my thoughts shared before the committee.

I am an RN of over 30 years and consider myself well-informed on both sides of the issue, from a public health and personal safety perspective.

I personally have taken the vaccine in past years, and abstained in more recent years. I have taken the time to research and inform myself about vaccines, and have made my own risk/benefit conclusions. What I strongly object to, is any law that makes it mandatory for an individual to have a foreign substance injected into their body against their will or beliefs.

I currently work in a telephone-based nursing role with minimal exposure to patients. I have a family history of vaccine-precipitated Guillan-Barre syndrome. These reasons alone are not adequate to exempt me from having to get an employer-mandated flu vaccine.

I have been employed as a Registered Nurse since 1976, and with my current employer for the past 16 years. For 2013, my employer has mandated that 100% of its staff will receive the flu vaccine this year by 12/1/13, with loss of employment for non-compliance. While some may argue that I have a "choice" in this matter- find a different job or field to work in- I would argue that having vested over 40 years of my life training for and continuing my knowledge in this career, it is asking a tremendous sacrifice of myself and others in my position to forfeit experience, seniority and a job that I enjoy, because I choose to stand up for my decision not to receive this vaccine.

Having made it my mission to be proactive in my own preventive health care, I find it a direct contradiction to my beliefs, to knowingly inject a substance containing known carcinogens *(formaldehyde, mercury, Triton X 100) and pathogens (potentially contaminated or diseased chicken material) into my body. Not only are these documented harmful substances, but the pharmaceutical manufacturers admit that "Fluzone has not been evaluated for carcinogenic or mutagenic potential, or the impairment of fertility. And that "animal reproductive studies have not been conducted: it is also not known whether Fluzone can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman or can affect reproductive capacity." *information found on manufacturer's package insert.

Allow me to add, that as a nurse, I am aware of the benefits of certain medications and treatments. Professionally, and ethically, I do not attempt to impose my beliefs on patients or co-workers. When I recently had a tick bite resulting in documented infection, I availed myself to

medical evaluation and treatment with a prescribed antibiotic. However, as an educated and informed consumer, I exercise my right to making personal health care choices; whether to use a cholesterol-reducing drug, or work with dietary measures. As a clinic employee and healthcare worker in our country, we are asked to be sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity. We are to respect a patient's right to refuse a blood transfusion or stem cell use, based on their religious or personal beliefs. We are to provide dietary choices based on Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Vegan or other beliefs. And yet as an employee, I am being coerced to receive a vaccination, against my beliefs, or be terminated from employment.

My employer's **Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy** states it has been implemented for the safety and health of its patients that are more vulnerable to communicable diseases and may have a greater risk of adverse complications to such diseases than the general public. To this I reply, that each individual should have the *right* to do their own research and form their own conclusions about safety and efficacy. If a healthcare employee or patient feels "safe" getting a vaccine, and believes it will limit their acquiring the flu or other specified disease, then they should receive the vaccine and feel protected from unvaccinated persons who might harbor or develop symptoms of the disease.

However, knowing that the efficacy rate of the current Fluzone vaccine(as stated in package insert) is 60% for H1N1- with 39% being immune "pre-vaccine", 74% of H3N2- with 34% immunity "pre-vaccine, and 54% for Influenza B, and 41 % immune "pre-vaccine", getting the vaccine in no way affords 100% protection, and I believe the safety hazards outweigh the benefits. Furthermore, I believe that patients are far less likely to catch the flu from clinic employees versus other public places. As a population, medical personnel are educated to the effectiveness of frequent hand washing- the clinic stocks its exam rooms and restrooms with disinfectant soaps and waterless hand sanitizers. We are trained in our professions to cover our coughs and sneezes and disinfect surface areas. As an employee group, we have access to good health insurance and paid-time off benefits, enabling most Clinic employees to be able to stay home when ill. On the other hand, these same "vulnerable patients", will be observed shopping in big department and grocery stores, eating out at restaurants, and attending school athletic events and performances. The staff and customers in retail and fast food establishments are not able to wash hands between customers or after coughing /blowing his nose, and they are less likely to stay home from work when ill, due to having no paid leave, or even at risk of losing their job for failure to come in. Some of these same employers require employee to get a "medical excuse" if they miss a day of work, and without good insurance, the individual cannot afford to see a medical provider, or loss of wages, so are more likely to go to work when infected.

My employer in central WI has approximately 6,700. Many of these individuals are being forced to sacrifice their right to make medical decisions regarding their personal health care and safety, and are having to subject themselves, unwillingly, to receive the vaccination in order to remain employed and able to provide a home and food for their families. Health Care facilities across the country are adopting the mandatory vaccination policy, which I fear will eventually force many qualified health care providers(who have done their research and have legitimate reasons for abstaining from certain vaccinations) to leave the field, and deter young people entering college to pursue the medical field. This could result in hospitals, clinics and nursing homes being staffed by persons there only because they needed the job.

If mandatory vaccination policies such as these are allowed to occur in the healthcare arena, where **I** am affected, I foresee it will only be the beginning. Soon it will affect **YOU** or your family members, when it spreads over to teachers, daycare providers, bus drivers and beyond. I appeal to the legislators of WI to examine this subject of mandatory vaccination objectively and thoroughly, bearing in mind the precedents that are being set and the future ramifications. My employer's **Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy** clearly states that if an employee has not received the annual influenza vaccine, or obtained a medical and/or religious exemption by 12/1/13, terminations will be initiated started 12/9/13. I, and others like me, could join the ranks of unemployed in less than 30 days.

Respectfully submitted,
XXXXXX, RN
(name withheld to protect my employment)

FROM A PRIOR EMAIL THIS PERSON SENT on 11/11/13:

Thank you for your interest in this issue. It is unlikely that I will be able to attend the hearing, as much as I would like to be there to speak for myself and other co-workers at XXXXX Clinic who are facing termination if not receiving a flu shot. (I am scheduled to work actually, and short of having a feigned illness, doubt I could get the day off) I plan to send you a "testimony" to present on my behalf- which I will compose and send later this evening, (when not at work)....I also have the clinic "policy" that I would like to fax to you, if you could provide a FAX number.

MANY of the clinic's 6,700 are being forced to receive a vaccination against their beliefs, because they **NEED** to retain their jobs. I plan to submit a Religious Accommodation appeal, but do not know if it will be granted. If not, I am prepared to take early retirement, as I have the luxury of having turned 60 this past May and could access my 401 K if I have to. However, I had planned to continue working as a nurse for another 4-5 years. On behalf of the many co-workers who are under this age bracket, I hope that Wisconsin legislators will be pioneers in taking a stand to protect individual freedoms.

Attachments
from →
Same
person next
3 pgs

Email sent 8/30/13 from Employee Health Director

On August 13, the XXXXX Clinic Board approved changes to the Immunization of Clinic Worker policy

The biggest change will be that all employees will be required to receive the seasonal influenza vaccination prior to December 1 of the flu season or have a validated medical or religious exception to the vaccination. (Note: the link in the policy for the religious accommodation is currently not working. This document is attached)

Under the previous Seasonal Influenza Policy, "Reasons of conscience" was an allowable reason for not getting vaccinated, this has been eliminated and only Medical or Religious reasons for not being vaccinated will be considered.

Other changes include:

Adding Hepatitis B vaccination as a condition of employment (current and new hires)

Adding in other vaccine preventable diseases based on the risk of exposure at work.

The changes apply to all XXXXX Clinic employees, including those that do not work in a medical facility or work outside of the XXXXX Clinic system.

A question and answer sheet, the request for medical exception, and the religious accommodation request are attached to this e-mail.

Questions not addressed in the attached can be directed to me.

We anticipate that we will be starting the seasonal influenza program hopefully by next week. Most workers in Clinic facilities should be able to receive their vaccination in the department they work. Employee Health will be sending out more information on this shortly.

We do ask that employees that need a medical exemption or religious accommodation get these requests in as soon as possible so that they can be reviewed and processed. The December 1 deadline for vaccination or approved exception will not be extended for requests filed at the last moment.

Manager, Employee Health and Safety

MEMO Email dated 11/6/13

TO: XXXXX Clinic Physicians and Staff
FROM: Medical CEO, MD
RE: Influenza Vaccination

In August, the Clinic Board of Directors voted to increase our efforts to provide a safe environment for our patients, employees and staff by requiring that all employees and staff be vaccinated for influenza by December 1, 2013 unless exempted for medical or religious reasons as detailed in the policy.

After two months we have made very good progress, and a large number of our employees and staff have received the vaccination. We have a month left to complete the vaccination prior to the December 1st deadline. Marshfield Clinic is committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for our patients and our staff and the Immunization of Clinic Workers Policy is being implemented to assist with this commitment. Employees that are not in compliance with the policy by December 1 will be subject to the disciplinary action per the policy.

Thank you to those who have already received the vaccination and I ask those that have not done so to work with the Employee Health and Safety Department to receive your vaccination as soon as possible.

11/6/13 EMAIL FORWARDED , BY Dept manager, to non-compliant staff

Hello,

Please follow up on this ASAP.

Thank you,
MM, RN, BSN, Manager

From: Employee Health and Safety Manger.
Sent: Wednesday, November 06, 2013 4:44 PM
To: MM(my dep mgr)
Subject: Flu Vaccination
Importance: High

As of Nov 1, 2013, Employee Health does not have documentation that the following employees/staff have received the influenza vaccination or have filed a religious or medical exemption. The policy deadline for vaccination or having on file a medical or religious exemption is December 1.

The following time frame will be used relating to this policy for salaried and hourly employees.

Nov 1. Managers notified of all employees/staff that we do not have documentation of policy compliance on

Nov 15. E-mail to employee and manager noting that they are still not in compliance, with a reminder that the deadline is Dec. 1. This letter will constitute the first notification letter under the disciplinary section of the Clinic Worker Immunization Policy.

Nov. 22. E-mail to employee and manager. This notification will constitute the second notification that the employee is still not in compliance per the disciplinary section of the policy. This e-mail will notify the employee that they are still not in compliance and that failure to be in compliance by Dec 1 **will result in suspension from work on Monday Dec 2.**

If the employee is not in compliance during the week of December 2, **termination will be initiated starting on Dec 9.**

Providers will have the same time frame but failure to be in compliance with the policy will be handled by the provider disciplinary process.

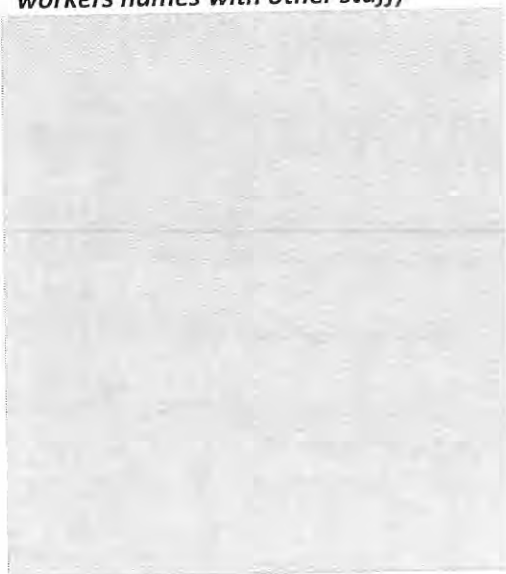
Please review the following list and discuss the requirements of the policy with each employee. Let Employee Health know if the employee is on medical leave and will not be back to work prior to December 1 (please list if you know approximately when the employee will return).

If the employee reports they received the vaccination from their provider, we do not have documentation of that and the employee needs to provide this (they can print their vaccination information from the MY CLINIC portal online. We only need the flu information)

Employees can contact Employee Health to arrange to get the vaccination, or if you have a number of employees that need the vaccination, you can also request another visit to your department by employee health staff to provide the vaccinations. We can also assist with evening or night employees.

If the employee is not working on a Clinic campus, have them contact their area employee health nurse to arrange the vaccination.

(I have omitted names to protect HIPAA- but original mail forwarded to us all, shared co-workers names with other staff)



Manager, Employee Health and Safety

Immunization of Clinic Workers

1) SCOPE

System Wide

2) DEFINITIONS & EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS

- a) **Animal care worker:** Any employee whose job exposes them to live animals or infectious body parts of animals.
- b) **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Declared Outbreak:** Outbreak of a disease that is officially recognized or documented by the CDC.
- c) **Community Outreach Employee:** Personnel that have direct contact with people in the community (i.e. Youth Net program, Americorps program, etc.)
- d) **Contracted Worker:** Any person that is hired through an outside agency. This includes Locum providers that are not directly contracted by the Clinic.
- e) **Employee:** All personnel who are paid by [REDACTED]. This includes hourly/salaried workers, providers, and providers that are directly contracted by Marshfield Clinic.
- f) **Free of Charge:** Vaccinations given by, or at the direction of Employee Health and Safety to employees will be without any charge to the employee.
- g) **Immunity:** Adequate levels of antibodies in a person's blood system thought to protect against the development of a disease.
- h) **[REDACTED] Facilities:** Buildings owned, rented, leased or used by [REDACTED].
- i) **MMR:** Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine. This vaccine is currently only available as a single vaccination with all three vaccines in it.
- j) **Non-responder:** A person who has been vaccinated with the recommended vaccine at recommended doses and intervals for a disease, but does not develop a documented immune response to the disease.
- k) **Non-Seasonal Influenza:** Influenza not a part of the CDC identified strains of influenza developed for the annual influenza vaccine and virulent enough that a special vaccine has been developed for it.
- l) **Seasonal Influenza:** Influenza strains that are identified by the CDC to be included in the annual influenza vaccine.
- m) **Serologic Testing:** A laboratory study that documents the presence or absence of immune system activity associated with the specific disease.

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Immunization of Clinic Workers
 Document ID: 4FAR5N4RSFP7-3-94
 Effective Date: 9/12/2013

- n) **Significant Blood Exposure:** An exposure to blood or other infectious body fluids that would be of a nature as to expose the employee to potential bloodborne pathogens.
- o) **Student:** For the purpose of this policy, a student is a person working at the Clinic as part of an educational program or for the purpose of learning. This includes persons in formal education programs and those shadowing health care providers.
- p) **Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap):** The current vaccine for Pertussis available in the U.S.
- q) **Unfixed Tissues:** Tissue that has not been processed with formalin, alcohol or other chemicals that would render a disease non-infectious.
- r) **Unprotected Exposure:** Exposure to a person with an active disease where appropriate precautions such as mask, respirator, eye protection, skin protection, were not used.
- s) **Varicella:** Chicken Pox
- t) **Varicella Zoster:** Shingles
- u) **Worker:** A person that works for, or in [REDACTED] facilities. Worker would include sales or technical personnel that have contact with clinic patients or staff within the Clinic facilities. Worker does not include persons employed by another company that are working on a short term basis and do not have patient or staff contact (i.e. construction workers working after normal clinic hours.)

3) POLICY BODY

The purpose and intent of this policy is to define the immunization standards that will be used by Marshfield Clinic for persons working for [REDACTED] or in [REDACTED] facilities.

- a) Evidence of Immunity
 - i) **Employees:** [REDACTED] requires that all employees of [REDACTED] have positive serologic evidence of immunity on file, or be documented as non-responders for:
 - (1) Measles
 - (2) Mumps
 - (3) Rubella
 - (4) Varicella
 - (5) Hepatitis B
 - ii) **Veterinarians and veterinary workers:**
 - (1) Veterinarians and veterinary workers with exposure to unfixed tissues that have the potential of carrying rabies are required to have serology testing for rabies vaccine antibodies every two years.

When document is printed it becomes an uncontrolled copy. Please refer to DCS system for most current version.

b) Required Immunizations

i) All Employees

- (1) **Vaccination:** All employees, including new hires that do not have a positive titer for the diseases listed under 3.a.i) are required to be vaccinated for that disease as a condition of employment.
 - (a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will provide all required vaccinations free of charge.
- (2) **Tdap:** A documented vaccination against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap), given since 2006, is required for all new hires and all employees.
 - (a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will provide Tdap vaccination free of charge for all employees that have not had the vaccination.
- (3) **Influenza:** Documentation of seasonal Influenza vaccination for all workers is required annually prior to December 1 of each year. All persons covered by this policy that start work between December 1 and the end of the influenza season will be required to be vaccinated, or provide documentation of being vaccinated, with the current year's flu vaccine.
 - (a) Influenza vaccinations will be made available to all employees at no charge. Arrangements will also be made to reimburse the cost of influenza vaccination for employees that are not provided access for a free vaccination through the Employee Health Vaccination Process.

ii) Lab Employees

- (1) **Typhoid:** Laboratory personnel identified by lab administration of being at risk of exposure to Salmonella Typhi from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination for typhoid within the last 5 years. Employees without documentation of current vaccination will be vaccinated with the Typhoid vaccine free of charge.
 - (a) Booster Typhoid vaccinations will be provided free of charge every 5 years.
- (2) **Meningococcal:** Laboratory personnel identified by lab administration of being at risk of exposure to Neisseria meningitides from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination with the meningococcal vaccine. Employees without documentation of current vaccination will be vaccinated with the appropriate meningococcal vaccine for their age free of charge.
 - (a) Booster Meningococcal vaccination will be provided free of charge every 5 years.

iii) Veterinarians and veterinary workers

- (1) **Rabies:** Veterinarians and other veterinary workers identified by lab administration as being at risk of exposure to Rabies from work duties are required to have documentation of vaccination for rabies within the last 2 years. Workers with an identified potential for exposure that have not been

vaccinated, or have a rabies titer below 1:5 will be vaccinated/revaccinated free of charge.

iv) Students, Contracted Workers, Community Outreach Workers, and other non-Clinic employees:

(1) Prior to starting work for [redacted] Clinic; all workers who are not employees of [redacted] Clinic but work in a [redacted] Clinic facility or have direct contact with patients or community members, will provide acceptable proof of vaccination according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Immunization of Health Care Personnel Guidelines for:

- (a) Measles
- (b) Mumps
- (c) Rubella
- (d) Varicella
- (e) Hepatitis B
- (f) Tetap

v) Additional Required Immunizations

(1) **CDC Declared Outbreaks of Vaccine Preventable Disease.** In the event a CDC declared outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, [redacted] Clinic will follow the recommendations of the CDC. If vaccination is recommended; all employees of the [redacted] Clinic (or the specific groups of employees identified as needing the vaccination) will be required to be vaccinated against that disease as a condition of employment unless a medical or religious exception is approved.

(2) **Other Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** If research projects or new laboratory tests expose employees to a not listed vaccine preventable disease; employees identified as at risk of exposure will be required to be vaccinated against that disease.

c) Actions

(1) Laboratory Titer Testing

- (a) [redacted] Employee Health and Safety will arrange for laboratory testing to ascertain if evidence of immunity to Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, Hepatitis B and Rabies (if job risk is present) on all new hires or existing employees that do not have titers on file.
- (b) Employees will not be charged for immunity testing obtained through the employee health and safety department.
- (c) The results of immunity testing done by [redacted] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will be provided to the employee and also put into the Employee's Health and Safety record.
- (d) After re-vaccination; Employee Health and Safety will arrange for retesting of the employees titer to document immunity or non-responder status.

(e) If after receiving the required re-vaccination, a healthcare worker still tests negative for immunity, Employee Health and Safety will document the results and date of re-vaccination in the Employee's Health and Safety record and consider the worker as a non-responder. No further testing or vaccination is required once non-responder status has been documented.

d) Precautions for Non-immune Workers

(1) Employees that are found to be non-immune to Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, or that have not been vaccinated against Pertussis, need to avoid exposure to any patient that may have Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (including Zoster), or Pertussis until they have been vaccinated.

(2) Employees that do not respond to vaccination (non-responders) or were recently vaccinated (two to three weeks post vaccination) should also avoid unprotected exposure to patients with Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (including zoster), Pertussis, or Influenza.

(a) If unprotected exposure does occur, notify employee health and safety of the exposure so that appropriate prophylaxis can be initiated.

(3) Employees that are found to be non-immune to Hepatitis B must report any significant blood exposure immediately to the Employee Health and Safety department so that appropriate prophylaxis can be initiated.

e) Masking

(1) Employees and Staff are required to:

(a) Wear a face mask while at work at the first signs of any respiratory illness, and to wear a mask at work throughout the course of any respiratory symptoms. (Mask needs to be on any time the symptomatic employee has contact with patients, employees or others.)

(b) If direct contact with a patient with Measles, or, Varicella (including zoster), cannot be avoided, employees and staff need to use a N95 respirator, gloves, gowns and eye protection. Face masks may be used for contact with Mumps, Rubella, Pertussis or Influenza patients. This includes employees with documented immunity to these diseases.

(c) Employees that are found to not be masking when potentially symptomatic will be subject to disciplinary action.

f) Other Immunizations

(1) Offered Immunizations

(a) [REDACTED] Clinic Employee Health and Safety will also offer vaccinations to specific employee populations for the following diseases.

(i) **Hepatitis A:** Employees traveling on Clinic business to countries or areas where Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended will be offered the vaccination free of charge.

(ii) **Travelers' Vaccinations:** Employees traveling on Clinic business to countries or areas where vaccinations for diseases not listed in this

policy are recommended will be offered the vaccinations free of charge.

g) Medical Exemptions.

(1) Documentation of Medical Condition.

- (a) Employees who have a medical condition that would exempt them from vaccination need to provide a written documentation of their medical condition from their health care provider to the Employee Health and Safety Department. (Medical Vaccination Exemption Form)
- (b) Documentation must include the specific medical reason that the employee cannot receive the vaccination.

ii) Review of Medical Condition.

(1) Medical Director of Employee Health and Safety

- (a) The medical director of Employee Health and Safety will review all medical conditions submitted for exemption to vaccination. The medical director will utilize vaccine medical exception recommendations by CDC in determining if the medical condition warrants an exception. In addition; information from the United States Public Health Services (USPHS), vaccine manufacturers, Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), other accepted professional medical and public health organizations, and peer reviewed medical literature, may be used in determining if the medical condition should be granted an exception from vaccination.
- (b) The results of the review by the Medical Director of Employee Health and Safety will be transmitted to the employee. If the employee disagrees with the findings of the review by the Medical Director; the employee can request an additional review by the Clinic Immunization Review Panel.

iii) Clinic Immunization Review Panel (CIRP)

- (1) The CIRP will be comprised of infectious disease, adult/pediatric allergy and other specialties as indicated by the medical condition being evaluated. The Employee Health and Safety medical director will be a non-voting member available for consultation.
- (2) The opinion of the CIRP will be communicated to the employee by Employee Health and Safety.
- (3) If the CIRP finds that immunization is indicated and the employee continues to refuse immunization; the enforcement portion of this policy will be implemented.

h) Religious Accommodations:

- (1) Accommodations for religious reasons for not receiving required vaccinations will be evaluated and if approved, provided by [redacted] Clinic. To request a Religious Accommodation for vaccination, the [redacted] Clinic Religious Accommodation Request Form must be submitted and approved by the Clinic Human Resources department.

- i) Enforcement
 - (1) Employees (Hourly and Salaried)
 - (a) Clinic Employee Health and Safety will notify all employees when they are found to be lacking in immunity for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella and hepatitis B. Employees will also be notified if we do not have documentation of a Tdap vaccination since 2006, annual influenza vaccination, or other vaccinations/boosters that are required for their job.
 - (b) Employees that do not receive vaccination within one week of initial notification will be sent a second letter along with a copy to their manager.
 - (c) Employees who are not vaccinated within one week of the second notice will be suspended from work until documentation of vaccination is received.
 - (d) After suspension, if compliance with the policy is not met within the week following the suspension; additional disciplinary action up to and including termination will occur.
 - (2) Physicians
 - (a) Physicians not in compliance with this policy will be referred to the Division Medical Director or the Chief Medical Officer.

4) ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- a) References:
 - i) CDC Immunization of Health Care Personnel
 - ii) Recommendations for Rabies Vaccine and Titer Testing
- b) Supporting documents available:
 - i) Religious / Accommodation Request Form.
 - ii) Medical Vaccination Exemption Form

DOCUMENT HISTORY	
Version No.	Revision Description
1.0	New Document
2.0	Updated to require vaccination for vaccine preventable disease such as Hep B, Influenza, meningitis, Typhoid, Rabies, and others as indicated.

When document is printed it becomes an uncontrolled copy. Please refer to DCS system for most current version.

LAST PAGE

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11/11/13

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Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I am writing you to let you know how strongly I feel about the mandatory flu vaccines that employers of healthcare workers are forcing them to get in order to keep their jobs! I never would have thought that we would see the day when such a thing would be a condition of working or losing your job. I feel for all the workers that have had to make the decision of getting the shot, or losing their job, and hopes of possibly getting another one. I speak from experience for I am having to deal with this very issue, which by the time this week is over I will know if I have my job **or** will be forced to leave the premises and not allowed to return. The **stress** and **anxiety** that comes along with this dilemma is wearing and should not have to be something that anyone should have to deal with. This is America after all! Not some communist country with a dictator telling us what we can and can't do, especially when it comes to our health choices. Employers cannot get away with this! I submitted my religious exemption and was told it was not good enough! I know that they say they are concerned for us the employees and that they care about us, and the patients, but I know that is not the real reason. I'm sure it's all about MONEY! If they cared about us they would respect our wishes as human beings. Lets not lose anymore of our freedoms than we already have!!!

Thank you for all your work and effort on this.

I hope that this bill will pass! Best of luck to all!

Sincerely,
JR

11/11/13

(38)

Dear. Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I am very much in favor of the flu vaccine bill being passed , as I do not believe an employer should have a say in what employees should put into their body. I work for a hospital and the arguement is that we need to protect our patients, I do not have direct patient contact, as a matter of fact I work from home. I do not feel these shots are effective or safe. There are a number of things contained in flu vaccines that many people do not know about and some are carcinogens. I have had to wear a mask for the last several years because I did not recieve a flu shot, and was made to feel like an outcast because of my choice not to vaccinate. People would look at me as if I had the plague. I did find it ironic that over the last two years not once was I out sick with the flu, but many of the people who were given the flu vaccine were out sick once if not more than once. To make matters worse many people came in to work sick with coughs, bronchitis, sneezing, fevers, and those people were not asked to wear a mask. I feel this is discriminating and nothing more than big pharma trying to make more money. Nothing would make me happier than getting this bill passed.

PLEASE KEEP MY E-MAIL AND NAME INFO CONFIDENTIAL.

Respectfully,

A concerned voter

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: troyandlynn@charter.net
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 2:56 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: AB 247

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Rep Thiesfeldt,

I am writing to show my support for the AB 247 bill going to hearing tomorrow. I am unable to attend the hearing but want it known that I firmly believe that as Americans we should have the right to make our own decision as to if we want to receive a vaccine or not.

I've never felt so bullied in the work place until the last two flu seasons. Last year it was, "get the vaccine or you have to wear a mask at all times while at work". Fine, I did that (wore a mask). This year it was mandated to get the vaccine or no pay raise in January, with next year's refusal is job termination.

Myself and several others filed for religious exempt forms, some were granted and others not. But again, you couldn't just say religious exempt you had to write up a form explaining your reasons for it, then go through a 30 minute phone interview with which they collaborated and decided if you were sincere or not about the religious waiver.

When did our country stop following our constitutional rights, and decide its ok for employers to dictate how our lives are run! I know the hospital gets its reimbursement according to what percentage of employees get the flu vaccine. How does that make it right? I understand big business puts money in government and in turn get things to go their way. Enough!

Please do not let money do the talking on this one, we as individual Americans need to be able to decide what is right for each of us.

Thank You for your time,

Lynn Phillips, RN

Hutkowski, Hariah

From: moss-noreply@legis.wisconsin.gov
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2013 1:44 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Form Results website comments

Form submission results

Date: 11/11/2013 1:44:24 PM

Field Name	Value
Comments	jeremy I oppose being madated to get a flu shot. they are putting army worms and pig kidney in the flu shot now and also their is mercury in it which very bad for our brains. it is designed to dumb us down as a nation..please watch the video Thrive by foster gamble and you will get all the info you need to help you make this decision and pass it along to the other senators...thanks for doing what is right....
Email	countrydoctordetox@gmail.com
Name	Renee waters
Address	747 crestview ln
City_state	fond du lac
Phone	9209228950
FormName	website comments

Message sent from: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/thiesfeldt/Pages/Contact.aspx>

11/11/13

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Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

Today I went to the Fond du Lac County building and got the flu shot there. I do not want the flu shot nor have I ever wanted it. I work at St. Agnes hospital and I have been a good employee for the last 17 years. St. Agnes has now a new policy that mandates that everyone has to get the flu shot. When I immigrated to the US from Germany in 1973 I was excited because of the US being a free country, where people had choices. It doesn't feel like this anymore. The bottom line is that if I do not get the flu shot, I have to wear a mask at work (which feels punitive and is impractical) or I lose my job. Before you get the shot, you have to sign a statement that reads: "I wish to receive the flu vaccine."

This has brought me a lot of stress, because they are asking me to sign something that I do not want. I would like to decide what goes into my body, especially in light of the fact that the flu shot has not been proven to be of any benefit. Since I cannot afford to lose my job, I did comply and got the flu shot at the county and I paid \$ 25 for it. While I still had to sign my name at the county, at least it did not say "I wish to receive the flu shot" .

I would be so thankful if you could vote to make this illegal! Many of my coworkers feel the same way, but are too afraid to make waves out of fear of losing their job.

Sincerely,
Sigrun ColumbiaI

11/11/13

I am a practicing RN in WI, I find it appalling that just because I work in health care I no longer have the right to refuse vaccines. I treat patients every year who have serious reactions to the Influenza vaccine. I have 2 friends who, now have been treated for Gillian Barre Syndrome, one still walks with a cane as a direct result of the Influenza Vaccine. She was an ICU patient for weeks, sent on to a rehab facility for weeks, and still has difficulty walking all related to the Influenza Vaccine. This was last year!! As a patient in a hospital I have the right to refuse to be vaccinated and at my MD's office I can still refuse the injection, but because I work in Health Care if I wish to keep my job I HAVE TO GET THE VACCINE! What happened to my rights?? Will the CDC or my employer pay my bills if I have a reaction to the vaccine? Please give us in Health Care the same right to refuse as the rest of the population!!

XXXXXXXXXX

Regarding Flu Vaccine in the Workplace

Nov. 12, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I work in a long term care rehab facility providing physical therapy to a variety of diagnosis. I have worked in this profession for over 18 years. I maybe have had the normal everyday flu 2 times in my working career. I maybe have missed work due to sickness 5 times during those 18 years. I eat a proper diet and supplement my diet with organic vitamins.

The flu shot has been offered yearly by the company and it is paid for. Each year I had to go through an education process as to why the flu shot is recommended. I have always declined. In the year 2011, the company was again recommending the flu shot. If you chose not to take it, you would be required to wear a mask. Obviously, it is very difficult to communicate with a patient especially ones that are hard of hearing. I chose to get the flu shot that year against my better judgment.

In 2012, the company decided to make it mandatory that all employees get the flu shot. If you chose not to get the flu shot, your employment was terminated.

I ended up taking a different job that does not require the flu shot. I am making less money and it is less hours. I do still work at the prior company at a per diem basis. I just choose to not work during the cold and flu season to avoid taking the flu shot. I miss out on extra wages that I could be earning.

I am also afraid that they will terminate my employment due to not following the companies policies. I know that this has happened to a few of my other coworkers who chose not to get the flu shot.

I chose not to get the flu shot due to the possible side effects, inability for it prevent the flu (only a certain strain which they don't even know what it will be, just a guess), and that I am a healthy active person. My immune system is not compromised by other diseases.

Thank you for your time.
XXXXXXXXXXXX

11/2/13

(47)

Hi Jeremy,

I am working tomorrow so I would like to email you my story to share. And I will need my name confidential because I still work for Agnesian.

It is mandatory at Agnesian Healthcare to have a flu vaccination in order to keep our employment. For the past 2 years I have tried to get exempt for personnel and religious reasons. Only to be turned down for my personnel reasons not even being looked at because they aren't into natural remedies. Also my religious were turned down because my beliefs were from scripture and not from a church. I feel that Christianity comes from the bible and your heart I don't feel you have to frequent a building to have religious beliefs.

But then my story gets even better. Last year after I had the mist I had a bad reaction with heart racing, Palpitations, dizziness with near passing out. And turned this in to workman's comp and they covered me and assumed responsibility until I had to have an expensive procedure to hopefully get my life back. And then they decided they were no longer responsible and made it impossible for me to have them take care of my medical bills as they should have.

I had a catheter ablation done and am on the mend. \$57,000.00 later Not sure if my life will ever be the same.

So I have been through a lot this past year and still going through things. Not sure Agnesian really cares about the health of there employes as much as the money that lines there pockets from having a certain amount of employees immunized.

Hopefully you will be able to help others before it's too late for them.

I am finally exempt this year but only thanks for my Dr standing up for me. And I will have to wear a mask for all of flu season which seems to be more of a punishment because everyone knows that masks aren't effective.

Thank you for standing up for what's right.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Matthews, Meagan

From: Betty Mihlbauer <bmihlbauer@mountcalvarywaukesha.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Shot

I work with the school system ~ in 1993 I was "forced" to get a flu shot by the principal ~ who stated I needed this as I was with children all day long and exposed to all the various illnesses.

I did get my flu shot ~ gave the principal his paper of proof ~ and promptly became sick for the entire winter.

I was very lethargic, feverish and felt tired all of the time.

My doctor told me that the shot does affect people in various ways and unfortunately my body reacted very adversely.

That was the only flu shot I have had in my entire life ~ I'm still with the school system but no longer required to get the flu shot as the principal saw first hand how I reacted to it.

Matthews, Meagan

From: Diane Kollath <mkdollath@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 1:42 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu vaccine

I am one of thousands of nurses who are opposed to the flu vaccine being mandated. I ,unfortunately, now have a chronic disease due to receiving one vaccine. My lungs look as if I have smoked my entire life and I never have. I have COPD due to the vaccine and am now allergic to many things I never had been before. My pulmonologist has said "he can't tell me how many people he see who have the same signs and symptoms of lung disease who were just fine prior to taking the flu vaccine". I realize this is a billion dollar money maker at the expense of our health. I will never be healthy due to this vaccine. It has destroyed my immune system. I have been "grandfathered" in at my place of employment and in the past have had to wear a mask the entire flu season (9 months) due to a doctor's excuse to not receive the vaccine. They will not hire a person who cannot or will not submit to this vaccine. This is not fair as to not having a voice in what is injected in your body. If everyone knew what really was in a flu vaccine. I think alot more people would be objecting. We are told it's "just a dead virus" but has deadly additives. Most of my co-workers do not want the vaccine but do not want to lose their job either. It should be a choice of what is injected in our bodies. We should not lose our jobs. I am not saying where I work but it is a reputable nursing home/rehab center. Sincerely, Diane Kollath

11/12/13

47

Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I would like to thank you and everyone else that is working on AB 247, I greatly appreciate your efforts.

I am currently employed by Marshfield Clinic and I am in fear of losing my job due to the mandated influenza vaccination. If I don't get it by **Dec. 1st** I WILL be terminated unless I have a medical reason or a religious exemption. I have requested a religious exemption and will be questioned by a panel in a couple weeks. I have offered to purchase and wear masks to prevent any undue hardship for the clinic. My patient contact is rare because I work 5pm to 1 am. Rarely are there patients in my area after 5pm and if there are I don't even have any contact with them. I haven't missed a days work due to illness, nor have I come to work sick in the 3 1/2 years of my employment with this clinic. I have never taken the influenza vaccine, many other co-workers have and have come down with the flu.

I have been looking for other employment but can't find anything that compares with my present job and the benefits that it offers for the type of work that I do. My husband is disabled and I carry the health insurance for our family. I CAN'T afford to lose my job. **I NEVER thought I would be put in a position to inject something into my body that I'm totally against!** There are many other employees that have the very same concerns as I do.

I know the effectiveness of this vaccination is only around 50% for the last couple of years according to the CDC web site. I also know that there are risks with some severe consequences like paralysis, neuropathy and severe allergic reactions. It also contains toxins like thimerosal (mercury) and formaldehyde, "in July 1999, the Public Health Service agencies, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and vaccine manufacturers agreed that thimerosal should be reduced or eliminated in vaccines as a precautionary measure." <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/Thimerosal/Index.html> I should never be forced to inject something that only has a 50% chance of protecting me.

PLEASE pass this bill.

Thank you,
XXXXXXXXXXXXX

11/12/13

1/2 (48)

Dear Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I received an email from a friend of mine informing me of the meeting Nov. 13 regarding the flu shot vaccination. I will not be able to come to Madison to testify on my behalf what transpired with me regarding the flu shot, but I would appreciate it if you could point it out at the meeting on my behalf.

We were told by our employer that the flu shot would become mandatory this year (2013), and if you did not get an exemption, or did not receive the flu shot, your employment would be terminated. Just a brief update on what took place for me. I chose not to receive the flu shot, but I did turn in a religious exemption, (which was offered along with a medical exemption). I was told my exemption was not approved by Sr. Management, so therefore, according to what we were told, my employment would end. Instead of leaving with "fired" on my record, I chose to retire from my job there. I was employed there for 15 years, did not work with patients, and also was willing to wear a mask during flu season (as stated in the exemption form if it was approved by mgmnt.). I also had never had the flu shot, and never missed any work from being sick. The day before my retirement, Human Resources informed me that they had changed a few things regarding the religious exemption (because two other employees were denied and then chose to sit before a panel and plead their case, and then they were approved). Management now said they finally accepted the fact that there was more to people's faith and what was in people's hearts than what they chose to believe by the exemption form. I chose not to do that because now, along with the denied religious exemption form, a letter from my pastor stating my religious beliefs and what I stood for and how strong I was in my faith, I could turn that in to Human Resources and they would set up an appointment for me to sit before a Personnel committee and plead my case again (and basically beg for my job back). It wasn't worth it to me to have to beg and plead my faith and beliefs, the stress and humiliation I went through, and would go through again, only to possibly be denied again. If they didn't believe or accept what I turned in on the exemption form the first time, what would a letter from my pastor and sitting before a panel, that they chose, make any difference now.

The biggest reason for the push on a mandatory flu shot was because we were told our place of employment had to be at least 95% compliant to receive a kick-back for medicare. Not a good reason to SELL all of your employees out. It is also sad that they had already forced the biggest majority of employees to get the shot before they decided to change the rules. This could possibly have prevented many others from getting something injected in their bodies that they didn't want there in the first place. Several of the employees told me they did not want the shot, but needed their jobs, so was backed in a corner and had to go along with it to save their employment.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony, and we can only hope this can be stopped so people can choose what they want injected in their bodies instead of being told they have to. It is a pretty stiff sentence to lose your job because you don't agree with their choice for you.

If possible, Mr. Thiesfeldt, I would like to remain anonymous on this issue. If you personally would like to email me for more info, that would be good especially if I can be of help in any way to end this battle.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

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Matthews, Meagan

From: kmaurisak@charter.net
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 2:52 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill

11-11-13

Dear Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt,

As of the date of this letter, I am waiting for an answer from my employer as to whether or not I will be able to keep my job. I have put in for a medical exemption to not receive the flu vaccine. I work at a large medical clinic as a housekeeper during the hours of 5pm to 1am (after clinic business hours). The clinic has made it mandatory for all employees to receive yearly flu vaccinations. There are many of us who may lose our jobs, as we either have medical and/or religious beliefs that require us to decline taking these vaccinations. I personally have both reasons, but have requested a medical exemption and have provided my employer with a doctors note and an explanation of my health problem and why I can't take the vaccine. As I said, I have not heard anything back yet, but I have heard that it's very hard to get the exemption. I have a co-worker who had requested a religious exemption with quite a detailed letter of her beliefs, and she was told that she has to appear by teleconference in front of a review board. What an intimidating thing to have to go through! She has to speak in front of a number of doctors/people, telling her beliefs and being questioned, and then having this board decide if her religious beliefs are good enough.

Our employer states that getting this vaccination is for patient safety, but the truth is, that it's really for reimbursement purposes. My understanding is that by 2015, per Obamacare, a certain percentage of employees have to be vaccinated or health care facilities will lose reimbursement on Medicaid due to a point system where they would be fined for non-compliance.

I personally would like to tell you how much stress and worrying this has caused for me, my family and my co-workers. My husband and I have been struggling financially for quite some time and can't even make it paycheck to paycheck. To be threatened with the loss of my job and healthcare insurance is unbelievable to me. My husband's employer, also a healthcare facility, is requiring mandatory vaccines next year and he was told that he would lose his job if he doesn't take the flu vaccine.

I thought this was America. How can a person be forced to inject something into their body that they can't take medically or that is against their religious beliefs? Or maybe, they just don't believe in putting toxic things into their bodies, such as the thimerasol (mercury) that's in most vaccines.

I would like to thank you for fighting for us against these mandatory vaccinations. Please, please help us to keep our jobs and health insurance.

Sincerely,

Kathrine Maurisak
1010 8th St.

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Jeanne Chianese <reign.as.king@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 4:22 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory flu vaccines

Dear Rep. Theisfeldt:

I understand you are considering a bill to stop mandatory flu shots. I am in total agreement with this from a freedom perspective and a research perspective. Here are some of the research facts: First of all, medical research indicates that the efficacy of the influenza vaccine is grossly exaggerated. (1) The British Medical Journal questioned the validity of studies claiming that the vaccine is effective, stating that "evidence from system reviews shows that inactivated vaccines have little to no effect on the effects measured".(2) Further, a 2008 issue of the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine concluded that "significant influenza vaccine effectiveness could not be demonstrated for any season, age, or setting examined".(3) A 2011 study from the Center of Infectious Disease Research Policy at the University of Minnesota showed there was only, at best, a 1.5% effectiveness rate for every 100 vaccinated. Also, the study reported that 97% of those who DO NOT get the vaccine, DO NOT get the flu. (4) Another Cochrane review of multiple studies of over 70,000 healthy adults led by renowned influenza specialist Dr. Tom Jefferson stated that, "reliable evidence on influenza vaccines is thin, but there is widespread manipulation of conclusions and spurious notoriety of the studies". Also, "there is no evidence that they affect complications, such as pneumonia or transmission."(4)

In addition, there is a lack of evidence to show that vaccinating healthcare workers prevents transmission of the virus. Cochrane researchers in their effort to determine whether vaccinating healthcare workers protects patients found that:

- a) There is no accurate laboratory proven data to determine influenza in healthcare workers.
- b) Studies identified in this publication had a high risk of bias.
- c) The studies found that "vaccinating healthcare workers who look after the elderly in long-term care facilities did not show any effect on the specific outcomes of interest, namely laboratory-proven influenza, pneumonia or deaths from pneumonia."(4)

Dr. Roger Thomas of the University of Calgary, lead author of the paper published in 2010 by the Cochrane Library, said this, "What we were looking for is proof that influenza...is decreased. Didn't find it. We looked for proof that pneumonia is reduced. Didn't find it. We looked for proof deaths from pneumonia are reduced. Didn't find it."(4)

Another exaggeration of the facts is how many people actually die each year from the flu. The Center for Disease Control (CDC), a strong proponent of the vaccine, does not itself believe that influenza is the cause of most pneumonia and influenza related deaths. Their website states, "Only a small proportion of deaths in either of these two categories are estimated to be influenza-related. CDC estimated that only 8.5% of all pneumonia and influenza deaths and only 2.1% of all respiratory and circulatory deaths were influenza-related."(5) In December of 2005, the British Medical Journal

(online) published a report by Peter Doshi, which sorted out the statistics of how many deaths the CDC actually knows died of influenza. "[According to CDC statistics], 'influenza and pneumonia' took 62,034 lives in 2001—61,777 of which were attributable to pneumonia and 257 to flu, and in only 18 cases was the flu virus positively identified." (6) Doshi also showed that from the year 2001, "the CDC actually finds the flu virus in a tiny proportion of people who are estimated to have died from the flu." (6)

Being vaccinated is not without its risks. There is the risk of dangerous and life threatening side effects in addition to the vaccine containing numerous toxic substances. Possible side effects include, but are not limited to, Guillain-Barre syndrome, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy, acute disseminated encephalomyelitis, acute transverse myelitis, optic neuritis, cerebellar ataxia, giant cell arteritis, peripheral facial palsy, seizures, anaphylaxis, neuropathy, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, and more. (4)(7) Depending on the manufacturer, flu shots contain antibiotics, formalin (formaldehyde exposure can cause weakened immune system, neurological damage, and is a suspected carcinogen.(8)(9)), avian proteins/DNA, avian (stealth viruses), a detergent (Triton X-100), hydrocortisone, MSG (excitotoxin), synthetic vitamin E (highly inflammatory), and thimerosal (mercury which can cause nephro and neurological damage). (4)

The hospital I work for requires employees who refuse the flu vaccine to wear masks from March to Nov to prevent the spread of the flu-- more punitive than safety measure, since the data does not support an endangerment of the general population to the flu or that the flu shots are effective, if there were an endangerment. The data I've shown demonstrates that those who get the vaccine have the same chance of spreading the virus as those who don't get it. Further, at healthcare workers should be entitled to the same rights as our patients. That is the right to refuse treatment as well as to expect to be free from all forms of harassment. (10)

My colleagues and I are very distressed over being forced to submit to a vaccine that isn't even effective or being forced to wear a mask for all our pt care which also is ineffective. This has all been done on the basis of misinformation and possibly a means for some to profit financially.

Here is a Bibliography which will lead you to other sources of research on the vaccine. Thank you for your concern in this matter.

1. Cochrane Database syst Rev 2006; 1.
2. BMJ 2006;333:
3. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med 2008 Oct; 162 (10): 943-51.doi 10.1001/arch.pedi.162.10943
4. <http://vran.org/in-the-news/forced-flu-vaccination-of-healthcare-workers-threatens-health-and-liberty/>
5. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm
6. <http://www.infowars.com/bombshell-18-people-died-of-the-flu-not-36000-as-claimed-by-the-cdc/>
7. Package inserts for FluMist and Fluarix
8. http://www.naturalnews.com/037653_vaccine_additives_thimerosal_formaldehyde.html
9. <http://voices.yahoo.com/formaldehyde-vaccines-toxic-substance-poses-threat-1676841.html>

10. <http://www.passionforpatientcare.org/oth/Page.asp?PageID=OTH101065>

11. http://www.columbia-stmarys.org/Vision_Mission_CoreValues

-
_Additional research sources concerning the flu vaccine can be found in the article that is #4.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Chianese

reign.as.king@gmail.com

11/11/2013

Dear Representative,

I am sure that by now you have done your best to inform yourself on the influenza vaccine and why so many people are opposed to mandating it for our healthcare workers, so I won't bore you with another letter listing facts and statistics. Instead, I am writing to share my story.

My name is Michelle Pierquet-Hohner. I am 41 years old. Until December of 2007, I worked my entire career in healthcare. For the first 10 years I was employed as a Child Life Specialist at Children's Hospitals. I had an integral role within the care team. My responsibilities included providing emotional, educational, diversional, and developmental support to children to minimize stress of illness and hospitalization, promote optimal growth and development and enhance quality of life.

In 2005, I accepted a new challenging position in which I had the opportunity to create a Patient Navigation program for patients beginning cancer treatment throughout that particular healthcare system. I served as a liaison between patients, families, and healthcare team to ensure above and beyond adequate cancer care and supportive services were provided. I assisted patients in obtaining information on diagnosis, treatment options, insurance and medical assistance. I also worked alongside other community services to provide education and community outreach.

In December of 2007, the hospital I was employed at was strongly encouraging employees and the community to get their flu shot. Like many of the other employees, I believed that this was the most responsible thing to do and so I did.

Approximately a week later, I noticed a strange tingly feeling in my legs and that night I had a difficult time climbing the stairs in my home. I wrote it off as a consequence of wearing fashionable instead of functional shoes. The next day I had difficulty walking. My legs felt very heavy and various co-workers asked me if I was ok. I was a little concerned, but honestly figured it was from working so much and being on my feet for too long. I decided to spend the afternoon working at my desk (thinking I just needed to let my body rest a little.) After an hour or so, I needed to use the restroom and when I tried to stand up, I couldn't. I couldn't feel my toes or legs up to my mid-thigh. I couldn't walk.

I was brought to the ER immediately, where I met with a neurologist who did an initial exam. One of the first questions asked was: Did you receive a flu shot and when? I honestly didn't even think much of it at the time. I underwent a variety of medical tests/procedures. I was told that I had Guillain-Barre Syndrome and that I should call my husband to come from work right away. I explained to them that my husband was working on an important project that evening and wouldn't be available until late. The neurologist then explained to me that I needed to call my husband and any other family right away; that I would likely be sedated and put on a respirator before the end of the night.

Upon my admission as a patient to the hospital (in which I was employed,) our wellness coordinator stopped by my bedside. At first I thought it was a concerned / friendly visit, but when she handed me a copy of the paper I signed prior to receiving this vaccine, I knew that it wasn't a social call. I was honestly confused as at that point I didn't even understand the correlation. It was a while later, when I started to educate myself on the possible dangers of the influenza vaccine, that I was reminded about this strange visit.

I never did need to be put on a respirator - thank God, and I was and am often told that I am one of the lucky ones. I had to spend only a couple of weeks in the hospital. When I was able to move short distances with a walker, I was discharged home for outpatient physical rehabilitation. It was a long painful recovery and a lot of it is forgotten due to the medication they had me on for severe nerve pain. I am going on seven years now and I wish I could say it is all behind me, but I don't think it ever will be. I am able to walk without assistance (most days,) however I often struggle with painful neuropathy in my feet and legs and I fatigue very easily. Not convenient at all to a mother of two active little boys.

Not only has this illness affected me physically / emotionally, it has affected me career wise. I loved my career in healthcare. I was dedicated and passionate about helping individuals and families within the system. I was considered a valuable employee. However, the pressure to receive an influenza vaccine has discouraged me to work in healthcare. It could quite possibly kill me. I was fortunate to secure a position at a small non-profit. While this is also rewarding, my income is approximately half of what I made in the hospital setting, qualifying me to purchase health benefits for my children through BadgerCare.

I ask if you haven't yet, to please do your research on the influenza vaccine. Unfortunately, I didn't know about the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program until three years after my diagnosis with Guillain-Barre. Three years being the cut-off to apply for any type of compensation. I was not surprised to read recently that as of July of 2012, there have been more than 84,000 reports of reactions, hospitalizations, injuries, and death following influenza vaccinations reported to the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System, including over a 1000 related deaths and over 1600 cases of Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

With all this said, I am simply asking you to **PLEASE SUPPORT Assembly Bill 247.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmly,

Michelle L. Pierquet-Hohner
1345 Franco Court
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 412-8141
M_pierquet@hotmail.com

To: Rep. Thiesfeldt

Cc: Rep. Swearingen & Sen. Tiffany

Re: Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill (AB247)

I, Timothy C. Stolar of Rhinelander, WI submit this testimony in favor of the Influenza Vaccine Exemption Bill, AB247.

Let me first begin by stating that I am not a doctor, nurse, medical assistant, CNA, or etc. I am however, a Sr. Project Engineer with a company in Rhinelander, WI. Being an engineer, I do not work full time in hospitals or clinics, so it is likely that initially it may seem I have no involvement within the medical field.

However, I believe in serving my community and country much like my Grandfather and Father have done before me, as well as setting a good example for my children. As such, for the past four years I have been a Volunteer EMT-B with the Township of Sugar Camp, in Oneida County. As a volunteer, I need to make myself available to respond to emergencies at all times of the day and night, and it is during medical emergencies that I do come into contact with patients and enter hospitals. Many times it is in the middle of the night, and many times I have to leave my family during family activities to be able to respond.

As an EMT-B, I am paid by the Township of Sugar Camp for my "on call" time. However when responding to a call, I become an employee of St. Mary's Hospital of Rhinelander, WI. It was not until about one year ago that I have been required to take the influenza vaccination. To this date, I have refused this vaccination. I am now under the threat of not receiving my yearly pay raise, and if I do not receive the vaccination next year, my Volunteer position will be terminated.

It has been my experience that when I have received the vaccination, I have become very sick following the injection, and was often sick throughout the winter months. I have only received it twice in my life, and each time I was very sick. I have seen this happen to others as well.

My Wife is a Registered Nurse, so she has routine contact with patients on a daily basis. For her, the influenza vaccine causes similar symptoms to her as it does to me. Last year my Wife had accepted a new position with a local medical group. Doing the right thing, she gave her four week notice to her old employer. One week prior to her starting her new position, she was required to receive the influenza vaccine. This was never a pre-employment requirement. She refused this vaccine and her offer was revoked. There was no justification, and since then she has not been considered for another position within that facility. Because she had given her notice to her former employer, and three weeks had passed, she was now out of a job. Losing that income was very detrimental to the financial health of our household and to the local economy in general.

However, the bigger issue is not I getting sick, my Wife losing a job, or etc. The issue is the attack on our personal rights and individual liberties. Forcing any employee, volunteer, or contractor to receive a vaccination or otherwise hold them hostage over pay or cause them to lose their job is unethical. It is a direct attack against our Fourth Amendment rights to be secure in our persons against unreasonable searches and seizures. While many may consider the vaccination not a search and seizure, it is certainly a seizure if employment or payment is revoked if one refuses.

I believe in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. I teach them to my children, and tell my children on a daily basis that these documents are the supreme law of the land. That no one can go against what these documents say. And any change to them simply removes our freedoms as American citizens under God. As such, I also teach them to fight any attack on them.

So, if refusal of a vaccination that is not 100% effective means I will no longer be able to be a Volunteer EMT-B and serve the people in my community at their time of need, then I guess that is the case. Instead I will serve my country and community by fighting attacks on our rights and liberties.

I urge all elected officials to protect our rights as American citizens and pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Stolar
6207 Pine Lake Rd.
Rhineland, WI 54501

715-550-1225 (cell)
715-365-0517 (work)

When did the signage in doctors' offices change from "The number one way to avoid the flu is to wash your hands," to "The number one way to avoid the flu is to get the flu shot?" Since when is injecting ourselves with a large dose of toxins, which lowers our immune system for a few weeks, the way to avoid being sick? **Does anyone else even realize that the ingredients in flu shots are known neurotoxins?**

If you look through the flu information on the CDC (Center for Disease Control) website, and use a bit of logic and critical thinking, you can piece the following together in an order that leaves many questions:

CDC does not know exactly how many people die from seasonal flu each year. There are several reasons for this. First, states are not required to report individual seasonal flu cases or deaths of people older than 18 years of age to CDC. Second, seasonal influenza is infrequently listed on death certificates of people who die from flu-related complications. Third, many seasonal flu-related deaths occur one or two weeks after a person's initial infection, either because the person may develop a secondary bacterial co-infection (such as bacterial pneumonia) or because seasonal influenza can aggravate an existing chronic illness (such as congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Also, most people who die from seasonal flu-related complications are not tested for flu, or they seek medical care later in their illness when seasonal influenza can no longer be detected from respiratory samples. Sensitive influenza tests are only likely to detect influenza if performed within a week after onset of illness. In addition, some commonly used tests to diagnose influenza in clinical settings are not highly sensitive and can provide false negative results (i.e. they misdiagnose flu illness as not being flu.) (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm)

A number of flu tests are available to detect influenza viruses. The most common are called "rapid influenza diagnostic tests." These tests can provide results in 30 minutes or less. Unfortunately, the ability of these tests to detect the flu can vary greatly. Therefore, you could still have the flu, even though your rapid test result is negative. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/testing.htm>)

CDC estimates that from the 1976-1977 season to the 2006-2007 flu season, flu-associated deaths ranged from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/us_flu-related_deaths.htm)

(Your provider will) Not necessarily (test you for the flu if you have flu-like symptoms). Most people with flu symptoms do not require testing because the test results usually do not change how you are treated. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/testing.htm>)

Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult (or even impossible) to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can be carried out, when needed to tell if a person has the flu. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>)

You may be exposed to a flu virus that is not included in the seasonal flu vaccine. There are many different flu viruses that circulate every year. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pastseasons/1213season.htm>)

Unfortunately, some people can become infected with a flu virus the flu vaccine is designed to protect against despite getting vaccinated. Protection provided by flu vaccination can vary widely based in part on health and age factors of the person getting vaccinated. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pastseasons/1213season.htm>)

In addition to the flu virus, several other respiratory viruses also can circulate during the flu season and can cause symptoms and illness similar to those seen with flu infection. These non-flu viruses include rhinovirus (one cause of

Stephanie Jegen, Milwaukee WI

the "common cold") and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which is the most common cause of severe respiratory illness in young children as well as a leading cause of death from respiratory illness in those aged 65 years and older. (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/other.htm>)

To paraphrase the CDC: We do not know how many people die from the flu each year. The very large range estimate is somewhere between 3,000 and 49,000 people, over the course of 30 flu seasons. It does not change a physician's course of treatment whether you actually have the flu or not so usually diagnostic testing is not done, plus, the rapid test is very unreliable. Cold and flu symptoms are difficult "or even impossible" to tell the difference between base on symptoms alone, so we get our numbers using mathematical statistical methods, not facts. Also, you can still get the flu even if you were vaccinated, or you can get a different strain of the flu that is not included in that specific flu season's vaccine.

So basically, they have no idea how many people die from the flu each year. Since cold and flu have symptoms that are nearly impossible to tell apart, and since specific diagnostic testing is rarely done, how do they know who actually has, or dies from the flu? They only guess which strains will be active each flu season and base the vaccines on that guess.

It should be every person's individual decision which vaccines they subject their body to. A lot of thought goes into this for each person. Maybe a family knows that since they travel overseas a lot, they choose to have their children vaccinated for diseases that they are more likely to come in contact with in different countries. To that family, it is necessary. A different family, who has a parent who stays home with the young children who have been breastfed for at least the first 1-2 years of life and who live in a more rural setting might decide that vaccinating their children is not essential until a little later in their childhood when their bodies are more able to process the toxins that come along with the immunity. Since the flu shot is seasonal it should be a person's individual decision whether they want a flu shot that particular year. A build-up of heavy metals in our systems is real and dangerous. It should be a woman's decision if she would like to forgo the flu shot in a year when she is worried about carrying her new pregnancy to term, and maybe the next year when she has an infant at home, she will decide that is the year she will get the flu shot.

If you would open an insert packet from a flu shot vaccine you would find some version of the following sentence under section 8 regarding pregnancy: "There are, however, no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Because animal reproductive studies are not always predictive of human response, (vaccination brand name) should be given to pregnant woman only if clearly needed." A woman's pregnancy status in the early part of her pregnancy is no business of her employer. How is she supposed to protect her child if she is forced to either get a flu vaccine or be terminated from her job?

In the medical profession, flu mandates or flu shots as 'terms of employment' have employers offering the guilt that "we must do what is best for our patients." This argument folds in on itself when we know that we can still transmit the flu virus even if we are vaccinated. The CDC says that "People with flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away. Most experts think that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a person might also get

flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.” (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm>) So if someone spreads the droplets into the air, and go talk to someone else in close proximity I have now potentially spread the flu virus.

Individuals who get the flu shot might in fact have a false sense of security regarding their immunity to the flu that year. They might stop doing, or decrease doing, all the dozens of other things that prevent the spread of the flu. Those things include, but are not limited to:

- 1) WASH YOUR HANDS.
- 2) Take a high quality multi-vitamin every day.
- 3) Consume probiotics daily.
- 4) Take a Vitamin D supplement every day.
- 5) Use a high-quality air filter in your home to filter out bacteria and mold spores.
- 6) Get regular exercise to boost your circulation and immune system.
- 7) Use therapeutic-grade essential oils every day! These were the medicines that cured illness and disease before convention chemical medications came on the market. In most cases they work better than pills because they are natural and have no side-effects.
- 8) Minimize exposure to immune-damaging chemicals in our modern-societies everyday products. Examples include: cosmetics, anything with fragrance added, and cleaning products. Most contain chemicals that are carcinogenic.
- 9) Avoid processed foods.
- 10) Eat only organically grown, whole foods.
- 11) Stay hydrated.
- 12) Avoid refined sugar which lowers your immune system.
- 13) Add high quality Omega-3's to your diet.
- 14) Get enough sleep.
- 15) Reduce your stress whenever possible.
- 16) Eat local, raw honey.
- 17) Eat more antioxidants like beta-carotene.
- 18) Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- 19) Cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow or into a tissue.
- 20) Stay away from sick people.

If the flu shot worked so well, everyone would want to do it. Companies would put out the word that they are having flu clinics and everyone would jump on board because it was so great. Instead, people have reservations that cannot be ignored. It seems very unnatural to inject ourselves with things that are considered, by the world, as neurotoxic, meaning toxic to our nervous system. Sure there are times when we must do things that we do not want to for the benefit of the outcome. But the flu shot is only, on average, 50% effective and contains harmful toxins. It should absolutely be a personal decision if the benefits outweigh the risks. Americans do risk assessments every day. We do not need employers determining what we decide or what we put into our bodies. Sometimes the benefit will outweigh the risk for an individual; however, an employer casting a universal blanket saying they know what is best is irresponsible.

Stephanie Jegen, Milwaukee WI

We are listening to the sales pitch from flu vaccine manufacturers about how great the flu shot is. Most Americans do not realize that those manufacturers are exempt, by law, from lawsuits regarding the safety of their products. If their products are so great, why do they need legal exemptions?
(<http://www.know-vaccines.org/?p=1106>)

It seems that we all want the short-term answers for everything. Don't want the flu? Get a shot. Don't want high blood pressure? Take a pill. There are other ways to solve these problems but no one seems to want to put in the daily work of doing it the natural way (refer to those points listed above). Injection inserts are filled with tiny print containing all the side effects that any given medication can have. Those are much too frequently overlooked and we tend to get another pill to cure the side effects of the first pill and so on and so forth. We forget that our bodies were designed to fight viruses and bacteria and give us natural immunity.

Again, vaccines have their place, but individual rights to make decisions are going out the window. You could reply, "Well you can get a different job," but where will we go when every work place requires a flu shot or any number of other things that someone in an offices somewhere comes up with 'for the good of everyone.' Could we take away the jobs of thousands of people who went to school and have degrees in the medical field (that is where this is currently a large issue) because a company decided they wanted to implement policies? Large corporations and insurance companies knowing what is best for us, instead of us making informed and educated decisions on our own, is a slippery slope. When do they start making more and more decisions for us? Since when do I not have a say as to anything that is injected into my body?

It is very hard for me to justify putting toxins into my body, on a yearly basis, for someone else's benefit. It can be argued that "top medical professionals say it's necessary to get vaccinated." To that I would argue back that bottle after bottle of sunscreen has labels that say "Skin Cancer Foundation recommended," but they fail to mention that the number one active ingredient in over 90% of sunscreens on the market is Oxybenzone which is carcinogenic, meaning it causes cancer. It does so by creating free radicals in the body which damage DNA. So the Skin Cancer Foundation thinks this product is a great way to avoid skin cancer, but they do not mind you getting any number of other cancers. You can make your clothes smell great by using a dryer sheet. They will smell great, but you are also dosing yourself with another carcinogen. Conventional doctors treat cancer with radiation and chemotherapy which are both carcinogenic. Again we are at the risk-benefit junction.

Only I know what is best for my body and for my children's bodies as long as they are under my care. No one should be able to make that decision for me at the risk of losing my livelihood.

11/12/13

Feel free to use my name, I don't care. I'm not sure what you mean by written testimony. I'll give you all the facts I have.

I work for the Marshfield Clinic in central Wisconsin, in the past we have been allowed to submit a reason of conscious for not getting the flu shot. This year they have taken away the reason of conscious and only allow a Medical exemption or a religious exemption. They have written a new policy which states this and in addition it states that we have until December 1st to comply with the policy. First we will get a warning (my manager has already been notified once that I am not in compliance along with about 5 other people in the same department), we then are suspended on Dec 2nd and termination follows on December 9th if we still do not have the vaccine. IF we choose to submit a medical reason from our physician a review board will determine if it is acceptable or not. For the religious reason we have to meet with a Human Resources person, along with one of the clinic's attorneys, and the head of the employee health program and one other person attends (which I can't remember there position at the clinic), the four of them will interview you and then decide if you can use the religious reason. There are a number of people at the clinic who are opposed to the vaccine. Many of them do not know about this bill, the only reason I found out about it was because I contacted a lawyer that deals with employment issues. Matthew Yde from Wausau was the lawyer and he told me about this bill. I then informed whoever I could about it. I hope this information helps and is what you were looking for. Denise Kann

11/12/13

Please get this bill passed! My employer is requiring all employees to get this flu vaccine! If we don't we will be terminated. We have until Dec 9th to comply or that will be our last day. Several people from the Marshfield Clinic are against getting this vaccine and several have contacted you (which is how I got the information on the public hearing tomorrow at 1:00). We can fill out a religious exemption but have to "face" a board of 4 from Human Resources who will decide if we qualify...
Thank you. Denise Kann

11/12/13

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I receive the email for the hearing to fight against the mandatory influenza vaccine for healthcare workers. I will not be able to attend this hearing but I am definitely against the mandatory influenza vaccine as numerous health care workers I do work with are too. we feel our health rights are taken away from us. last year numerous patients who received the influenza vaccine still contracted the influenza virus. serious side effects can occur from receiving this vaccine and yet some hospitals mandate wearing a mask when not receiving the influenza vaccine. this is degrading and exposes that individual's health problems to all patients and staff that see this person wearing a mask..... they will question this person and now this person will need to explain their health problems in order for that patient or staff members to understand why they could not receive the influenza vaccine..... this is a complete violation of that healthcare workers health rights and privacy..... you may use this email at the hearing.... I would prefer my name not to be used but I am a registered nurse who is currently working and has an allergy to the flu vaccine. at this point my clinic does not mandate a mask but I fear it is the future as numerous other hospitals have made their staff abide to. I love my job and I love patient care. it is not my fault I'm allergic to the vaccine and numerous other medications. I am still able to function and do my job and take vitamins to support my health. there is no proof this flu vaccine works. so why take away healthy nurses from their jobs when this vaccine could injure them for life and who will help those that have a bad reaction and need medical help the rest of their lives?

11/12/13

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I work at a hospital that put into policy that the flu shot is mandatory or we lose our job. If you CAN get an exemption, you have to wear a mask from day 1 that the administration decides it is flu season until they decide flu season is over. One of the nurses, shortly after receiving her flu shot, was paralyzed from waist down and is still in a brief for she has not control, and she has neurological damage. We are told that we can make the patients sick if we don't get the shot. People come to the hospital because they are already sick. I have never received the flu shot and never have I got the flu. This is so unfair, for I do everything in favor of good health naturally. I found it strange that a home for the elderly was shut down a couple of times because so many residents were sick with the flu. They all got their shots. What does this tell you?

Dr. James Howestine wrote that Dr. James R. Shannon, former director of the National Institute of Health declared "The only safe vaccine is the one that is never used." Vaccines are profitable for the drug companies and legislation in the US exempts lawsuits against the Pharmaceutical firms in the event of adverse reactions to vaccines.

Walene James, author of Immunization: The Reality Behind the Myth, states that the full inflammatory response is necessary to create real immunity. There is valid reason to think that not only are vaccines worthless in preventing disease, they are counterproductive because they injure the immune system permitting cancer and auto immune diseases. Vaccines contain many toxic substances that are needed to prevent the vaccines from becoming infected or to improve the performance of the vaccine. Among them are mercury, formaldehyde and aluminum. Aluminum and mercury play an important role in the etiology of alzheimer's disease.

Once a vaccine is mandated, the vaccine manufacturer is no longer liable for adverse reactions. There is NO PROOF that vaccines work and they are never studied for safety before release. It is invading our rights to make a decision for ourselves.

Thank you.

Please do not mention my name for there was talk that many of our doctors were told that if they went to or talked of their feelings against the flu shot that they no longer have a job. I really appreciate what you are doing. I pray our voices will be heard.

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Matthews, Meagan

From: btulgren@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 7:48 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandated Vaccine

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt, I am righting you to beg you to please be strong and fight for our right to decide on weather or not to vaccinate. I never get vaccinated and had to this year because there was no choice. My rights were sold for government money, you see if our Hospital I am employed at is not at 90% compliant with flu vaccinations we loose funding for Medicare. I am not for sale! I have been injured because of the vaccine. I was vaccinated October 2nd and have not been the same since. I have constant pain in my arm and neck, have had to go to the DR, Chiropractor, and been on pretizone to try to get it settled down, something I should never have had to go threw. I have the right to choose and there is no Doctor, or Priest or Pastor that should have more authority over what's best for my body or give me permission to have a waiver to not be forced to have it. Freedom for our Nation hasnt been fought and died for only to start slowly loosing our rights because there are some who think they can make better decisions than I can for my own body. Have you ever noticed how natural medicine doctor, and chiropractors are against this.... Thee people who do not wright out prescription and not in bed with the pharmaceutical and drug companies, as well as the government. Its all a sham to make the government more in control of us and the power to make our own decisions for our health. Please hear my voice and fight for me and so many others. There are so many that feel this way and don't think anyone will listen. Please fight for our right to choose!! Thanks you Rebecca Tulgren btulgren@yahoo.com Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Philip Peckham <ppmp1969@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 5:46 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Employer mandates

To Whom it May Concern:

I have been told that there is going to be a public hearing on employer's requiring employees to participate in programs, such as the flu shot, as terms of employment and I wish to have my voice heard in opposition to this practice. Whether or not I take the flu shot, lose weight or quit smoking should be my decision not my employer's. These are choices that I should be able to make on my own along with my physician. If they can require us to do these things as terms of employment what is next?

Thank you for giving me a voice.

Mary Peckham
1405 Rockridge Rd
Apt 305
Waukesha, Wi 53188
ppeckham@wi.rr.com

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Doreen Sattler <doreeneda_2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 6:51 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Vaccine not require for employment in State of Wisconsin

Dear State Representative,
Please count me in on repealing that flu vaccine be not required for employment in the State of Wisconsin.

I have never gotten the vaccine and do not wish to begin now. My employer, a large healthcare company, is requiring for a condition of employment. It should be a choice, not a requirement. Please please do all in your power to make this illegal for a company to impose on their employees.

Thank you,
Doreen Sattler
Delafield, WI 53018
262-470-6579

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Matthews, Meagan

From: collin/jessie/nicholas martin <cjnmartin79@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 7:43 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Flu Vaccine ~ To be read at the public hearing / Assembly Bill 247

I have been working in the healthcare field for close to three years now. Last winter my company gave every employee an ultimatum. Either get the flu vaccine or consider yourself terminated. I will tell you this. I repeatedly offered to wear a mask during the flu season. I wrote a letter and had a meeting with my administrator. I had a heated debate with the director of nursing. I went to my personal physician seeking a reason why I shouldn't have one. I consulted my pastor about writing a letter which apparently goes against the fourth commandment in his beliefs. I was shot down at every single turn I made.

Now I am asking for YOUR help to repeal this unnecessary and un-American bill that was enacted in the first place. How dare anyone force what I should or should not inject into my body. That decision should be mine and mine alone, no one else's!

There are many reasons why I won't ever get this vaccine. The dangerous concoction of all the disturbingly scary ingredients is a recipe for health related issues in your later years. The biggest one being a ten times greater chance of getting Alzheimer's. The list for health problems is endless. There is a poor success rate in even preventing the flu. There is no single virus that causes the flu and there is no single flu vaccine that protects against all strains. Scientists take an educated "guess" as to what three of over 300 different flu viruses they expect to have the greatest virulence in the upcoming year. When you get the flu vaccine, your body produces antibodies to three of the specific strains of the virus. So you basically have a 3 out of 300 chance (one percent) of being vaccinated for the proper viral strain. Additionally, the viruses are always adapting and may change form by the time you are exposed. There's also the fact that this vaccine has less to do with public health and more to do with corporate profits. The general public is not knowledgeable enough to know the dangers as they take the CDC's word as golden. I could go on and on for my many reasons but these are just to name a few.

Because of my company's ultimatum I originally gave my notice. However, my boss and HR director worked with me to stay on as IHP(in house pool) during non flu season. Because of this I am no longer eligible for a raise nor do I accrue PTO for any summer days off. I've let my coworkers down as for seven and a half months out of the year I'm not allowed to work at all. Not to mention a lack of a paycheck from mid November until the vaccine expires on June 30th. I will then be allowed to come back into the building as of July first and repeat the process again.

I am a darned good worker who wants to work. I love what I do and have that need to contribute to society but this bill hinders me. I am out of work over this very problem and this foolish bill needs to be repealed and now. Do not take my rights, as a US citizen, away from me over a forced vaccine that could make anyone sick. This should be every single person's own right as to what is injected in their body.

If you have any questions at all please, feel free to contact me. I do have some free time on my hands.....for the next seven and a half months.

Jessica Martin
103 Armstrong Ct.
Mukwonago, WI 53149
cjnmartin79@yahoo.com
262-758-3466

11/12/13

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Mr. Thiesfeldt,

I wish I could along with my fellow employees, But some of them may not be at work the next day because our work place is " terminating them" for not accepting them not getting the flu shot. This is so UnAmerican I cannot believe it is happening! We're did our right's go as human beings to say Yes and No. Americans need to stand up for their right's!

Please be a voice for all AMERICANS. To say this is not right. People should have a choice in what they do and put in their bodies and should have no fear in retaliation about losing their jobs for there freedom of speech and act.

Thank You

Sincererly

Patty Roherty- Ellefson

11/12/13

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Hi,

I am sending this message hoping that our voice will be heard and make flu shot as a MANDATORY anymore. I am in favor of the flu shot- only IF that person really needs it. In other words, that person is prone to getting flu more frequent than expected.

At work this year, the upper management required as to have the flu shot as a MANDATORY order. That's the part that I don't agree on because I felt like they held a gun on my head. The option of not taking the shot does not apply to me. But I feel that I should have the freedom for myself. Also, I am fortunate like any other people out there that I have good immune system despite the fact that I have never seen and felt the cold snow before.

Thank you

XXXXXXXXXX, Phlebotomy (ASCP) CM

Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin

Germantown, Laboratory

W168N11237 Western Ave.

Germantown, WI 53022

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Heather Blexrude <h_blexrude@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 9:28 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Mandatory flu vaccine discrimination story

Here is my flu vaccine discrimination story.

I used to work at St. Agnes/Agnesian Healthcare almost 3 years ago as a receptionist. I believe in September or October (from what I can remember) of 2011 Agnesian first told their employees about the new mandatory flu vaccine policy by email. We were told we "had" to get the vaccine or were terminated. They did however state they would except religious and medical exemptions upon review. We had until November to have our exemptions in. If you didn't receive the vaccine or have an approved exemption by December 14th (or around that date) you were laid off from your position to "rethink" your decision. If you didn't have the approved exemption or shot by December 31st you were terminated from your position.

Being that this was my first time ever facing this situation I had no idea how to submit my religious exemption. I was freaking out since we had such a short notice to have our exemptions in. We were to submit any supporting documentation to prove your religious beliefs if you were submitting a religious exemption. I filled out a religious exemption form and submitted over 70 pages of (what I thought was) supporting documentation of my religious beliefs. I submitted religious material as well as medical material. I had absolutely no idea how to prove my religious beliefs so I thought the more I submitted, the more it showed my sincerity. Well I thought wrong.

They denied my initial submission stating since I submitted religious AND medical information that my religious beliefs were not sincere and are personal beliefs.

I don't remember the exact timeframe of everything that happened. But around the time I got my first denial I also found out I was pregnant. I was excited yet extremely scared at the same time because I had multiple miscarriages before this baby. I was thinking FINALLY a viable pregnancy but yet now I'm being forced against my religious beliefs to take a vaccine that could potentially cause a miscarriage or lose my job. Since the flu vaccine has risks and never had studies done and states in the insert that its a Category C and its unknown whether it causes harm or not to the fetus, I thought my pregnancy also qualified as a medical exemption. So I called Tammy Pitts, the human resources head person who we were to submit our exemptions to, and told her of my health status change and asked how to submit a medical exemption for this. She told me pregnancy isn't a bona fide medical reason to be exempted from the flu vaccine and that my pregnancy was more of a reason to get the vaccine. I asked her what my other options were if I didn't receive the vaccine and she told me to resign.

I called my PCP Dr. Lisa Weber and asked her about my pregnancy being a medical exemption and she also told me that my pregnancy was more of a reason to receive the flu vaccine. Her exact words were "oh hunny you need to protect yourself and your little one." She told me this as I was crying uncontrollably even though I told her my beliefs against vaccines. I also spoke with my OB physician Dr. Peschong (who is also religiously against the flu vaccine) and she also stated there was nothing she could do for me because the "medical field" says the flu vaccine is safe for pregnant women. She stated she would have loved to help me but couldn't because of how the medical association views flu vaccine as "safe" because it APPEARS to be safe. Even

though there are NO studies proving its safe for pregnant women.

I remember emailing Tammy Pitts again about how upset I was with how they were stating my beliefs weren't sincere and only personal and she told me if there was more documentation to submit to further back my beliefs to do so. So I did. They then denied me again stating I should have submitted that religious material with my first exemption.

Again I don't remember exactly when this happened but sometime in the "waiting" period of waiting to hear response on my exemptions I was harassed by co-workers for having different beliefs regarding vaccines. I was constantly asked why I didn't believe in them and was told I was crazy. I was told "maybe I should go live in a third world country, I would be crawling back to them begging for vaccinations." The one I remember most was when a nurse, Shelly Theisen, was literally yelling at me in front of patients, pointing her finger in my face and just screaming how I was selfish and going to kill everybody. There was a lot more to this but I just remember bits and pieces now that I try to forget about my horrible experience. I remember going to my Supervisor to tell her about it but she was never in her office so I periodically was going to check to see when she was back in her office but then I actually got a call from her to come into her office. So I went into her office and basically she told me I couldn't talk about my religious beliefs and vaccines at work anymore. I told her another receptionist asked me if I heard back from my exemption and I told her no not yet and that's when the nurse started in on me and asking me why I didn't want to get it and that's when she went off on me. That nurse was never reprimanded nor did I ever receive an apology. I on the other hand was told I couldn't talk about my beliefs or vaccines anymore?!?!?! How is that right?

At some point, I remember I went to the CEO and spoke with him, Steve Little. He basically told me "let this be a learning experience" or stepping stone in my life or something like that. He told me it's good that I stand up for what I believe in but still thought my religious beliefs were insincere?!?! Why would I go through all this trouble if I was insincere???

I sought a lawyer who was from out of state who wrote up an opinion letter. In response, Agnesian's lawyer told my lawyer that I apparently told co-workers I didn't have any religious objections to the vaccines and that I simply just didn't want to get it because I was being forced. This obviously was made up by someone. I never stated this. The fact that my supervisor told me I had to stop talking about my religious beliefs proves it right there! There were so many things that Agnesian made up and misconstrued my words to "make me" look insincere.

There are a lot more little details to this story but I tried shortening it up so you can get a basic idea of what I went through.

After sleepless nights, a ton of praying and asking for forgiveness and debating what I was going to do since they wouldn't approve my exemptions, I got the flu vaccine under duress to salvage my job since I was bringing a baby into the world. I couldn't bring a baby into the world with no job especially with how the economy is.

NO ONE should be able to scrutinize someone's beliefs or force a medical procedure that has risks and hold your job above your head. I felt like I was raped and couldn't do anything about it. I tried getting help with showing how sincere I was and no one would listen. Do you know how it feels to feel absolutely helpless? Have you ever had so much fear instilled upon you? I had fear of going against God, losing my job, losing my baby and my own life. I have no idea how I didn't miscarry with all of the emotional stress and damage I went through. Those two or three months were literally hell and the worst days of my life that I have ever

experienced! I am permanently emotionally scarred from that experience.

The following year (last year 2012), I submitted my religious exemption early since they never sent out an email and I wanted to make sure I got it in by the due date. I got it returned to me via US mail with a letter stating they revised the exemption form and that I needed to fill that out and resubmit it. Well, Tammy Pitts attached the SAME exemption form from 2011. They never did attach the new exemption form. It could have been an honest error but with everything that I experienced from the year before I could only assume they did that purposely in hopes that I didn't realize it was the old form and just sign and date it and resubmit it thinking it was the new form. They gave me so many days to have it in or I had to get the flu vaccine. So I think they purposely gave me the old form to delay the process so I wouldn't have time to fight it before the final date to receive the vaccine or lose your job. Or maybe they would have used that to decline me stating I never submitted the correct form on time?! Well luckily I realized they attached the wrong form and went onto their website to print off the correct form and submitted it. Well after I submitted the revised form, they then emailed me and told me I had to complete the form completely. There were a couple questions that I didn't know how to answer so I left them blank. So then I just put N/A and resubmitted it again. Then they emailed me telling me they needed further clarification and that I needed to meet with them. So I went to meet with them and they were sitting there interrogating me, asking me all of these questions about past vaccinations and about other actions that prove my religious beliefs?! Most questions I didn't feel comfortable answering without my lawyer present so that's what I told them and left it at that. Well, finally after a couple weeks I got my religious exemption approved FINALLY. Again, it was tormenting because I was fearing losing my job again and going against God again.

Even though I finally got my religious exemption, I decided to leave Agnesian. I couldn't stand the pressure and harassment any longer. I could NOT go through that EVERY year let alone the harassment and hostile work environment daily.

Please, please, please pass this bill. I know friends and family members that were either fired (exemptions were denied) and/or had serious reactions to the flu vaccine where it damaged them physically for the rest of their lives. No one should have to choose between a medical procedure with risks or lose their jobs!

Heather Blexrude from Fond du Lac (please keep my name anonymous--Thank you!!)

Thank you Jeremy for all your hard work and effort on this! You have touched the lives of many in Wisconsin!!! Stay strong in your fight for us!!

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11-12-2013

Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt,

Hello. My name is Renee M. Klofanda and I was a nurse who worked at Aurora Hospital and personally fought the flu vaccine battle and won! This was not an easy task. The 2011-2012 calendar year was when I was mandated to take the flu vaccine or lose my job (term of employment). Several reasons to why I do not take the flu vaccine are as follows; 1. Not effective 2. Contains many unnatural ingredients, poisons, and infertility (polysorbate 80). 3. Religiously I am a Christian and per bible law we don't follow this practice. 4. I was currently pregnant at the time.

Although I had filed a religious exemption, Aurora called my pastor and spoke with him. After declining to accept my exemption, I wrote a letter to the Aurora Vaccination board stating that what they were doing was unconstitutional and violated civil rights code. At this point I created a website; Stop Aurora Vaccination. Org (which I found out later was blocked by google), and radio show to alert other fellow employees about the unfairness of Aurora's actions. I handed out several fliers about the mandatory vaccination unfairness and educated my fellow employees on their freedom. Although my letter reached the Aurora Vaccination Board, they contacted me several times via phone belittled me regarding my choice not to vaccinate. Despite several calls from Aurora Vaccination Board, my exemption was not cleared. However, on what was suppose to be my very last day of employment at Aurora, after I had turned in my badge and said goodbye to my fellow workers, not even 2 hours that I had left the premises I was contacted again by the board and told that my exemption would be accepted. I worked with the company for approximately 1 more month then my contract ended and I had my baby.

It felt really good to take a stand and fight for not only my rights but the right of my unborn baby. I was simply applaud that I didn't have the right to choose what goes into my body (vaccine) and that the "caring" hospital/corporation didn't care about my personal freedom. From the standpoint of a nurse, this seems to be a trend and would appreciate it if the system would find better was to cure and treat people. Western medicine has gone beyond natural boundaries just to pinch a penny.

I have been a travel nurse for 7 years this January and believe immunity is the way to protect the body. Research is now beginning to show that vaccination, not just flu vaccines have serious LATE side effects to the immune system which are arising as Crohn's Disease, Obesity, Diabetes, and Mental Health Disorders. Why continue to inoculate when the trend shows that the vaccine is not effective? Follow the money trail.

Thank you for your time. If I could be of anymore help please feel free to call or contact me via e-mail.

Renee M. Klofanda RN-BSN
renee.klofanda@gmail.com
906-680-0068

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Stephanie <fonsfamilytrio@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:29 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: mandatory flu shots

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,
I heard you were going to fight against mandatory flu shots for health care workers. I'm a registered nurse who was made to get a flu vaccine in order to keep my employment. I have been able to avoid getting the flu shot for the first 14 years of my nursing career as its always been a choice. I never got the flu or the shot. I've always felt that the flu vaccine is nothing but toxic poison, a neuro toxin, with very little benefit, which is backed up by all of the natural doctors and most chiropractors. The flu vaccine has been proven to be just a guess of what viruses may be present. Most of their guesses are wrong. During my 15th year as a nurse, Aurora forced their employees to get one. Being a single mother, I had to maintain employment in order to keep our house and car. I begged to be allowed to be exempt from it as I have hashimoto's disease (an autoimmune disease already compromising my immune system) and my mom got sarcoidosis after she got the flu vac. Despite my medical history and family history, I was FORCED to let someone inject a POISON into my arm, if I wanted to keep a paycheck. Forcing people to inject poison in their bodies is something that should NOT be allowed anywhere, let alone in the United States of America- land of freedom. I had a bad reaction, causing me to be highly irritable, my skin felt like it was crawling, I felt like I wanted to shoot everyone in my path with a gun (thankfully I don't own any guns nor have I ever had this weird psycho feeling), my hands were shaky, my kids didn't want to be around me for WEEKS because everything irritated me and I yelled at everyone. Its hard to describe many of the neurological symptoms I had. I also had severe nausea. My restless leg syndrome, which I was able to be completely free from symptoms prior to the flu vaccine, came back full force. I felt MISERABLE for SIX LONG AGONIZING MONTHS. Imagine feeling like your skin is crawling with bugs for months. I still don't feel like I ever fully recovered, as my hands still have a fine shake to them, my lungs require more asthma medication than I have ever needed in my entire life, and my endocrinologist has been unable to keep my hashimoto's stable, my eyes also itch constantly - something that I never had before getting forced to get the flu shot.
It is a **proven fact** that THE BEST way to prevent infection is through proper hand washing. Its also proven that Vit D fights off the flu BETTER than the flu shot. Why aren't companies encouraging a more natural and healthy way to boost your immune system that actually works without side effects and poor guesses. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE fight against mandatory flu shots for anyone.

Thank you,
Stephanie Fons

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Chuck Milhlbauer <jamie1979@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 10:51 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: The Mandated Flu Shot

Hello,

I am writing to tell you how appalled I am that I have to have a toxic concoction of unhealthy chemicals injected into my arm, or else I can "consider myself unemployed." I work for a medical clinic dealing with patients all day long. I have never had the flu, because I do what I feel necessary to keep myself from getting sick and passing it on to my patients. There is Formaldehyde in the flu shot; I am well aware that this is a cancer causing agent. This, to me, is absolutely disturbing and down-right scary that we are subjected to this. It's blackmail! Working in the lab, many of our lab techs say that the rapid flu tests that they test that come back positive are almost always from people that got the shot. We see first hand that this does not work. I won't even get into all of the possible side effects of this with no guarantee that I will wind up with some life long ailing disease. Since all of the ingredients in this shot seem to change from year to year, no long term study can be done. I sadly feel as though I am living in a communist world and have to subject myself to this BS or else...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!!

Many prayers will be sent that this bill can be reversed. I passed along your email to many of my coworkers and peers. Hopefully, together, we can all make a difference!

Thanks again,

Jamie Mihlbauer
321 Morris Street #6
Pewaukee, WI 53072
262-347-7994

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Nicole Koller <nicmk@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 11:03 PM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Cc: Nicole Koller
Subject: Assembly bill 247

Senator Thiesfeldt,

I just heard that you will be addressing the Bill 247 tomorrow and strongly support your efforts in allowing employees the right to choose vaccination of the seasonal flu vaccine.

I have been an RN in Labor and Delivery for 16 years. I received the flu vaccination sporadically through the years. However, after my last flu vaccination in the fall of 2006 I become very sick with body aches and general malaise for months. I struggled well into the spring of 2007-suffering from Mono and intermittent bouts of spontaneous tachycardia.

I have never received the flu vaccination again and I never have suffered like that again. I currently lead a very healthy lifestyle and refuse to inject toxins into my body unwillingly!

After doing much research on studies of the ineffectiveness of the seasonal flu vaccine, the toxins involved and the possible side effects, I proudly choose to wear the facemask at work as an alternative to receiving the vaccination! However, I do not believe employers should be able to dictate or reprimand an employee for making a very personal choice to not receive it! Plus, it strongly affects patient care. It interferes with the intimate nurse patient relationship by placing a nonverbal barrier between the care provider and the patient.

Please continue your efforts on this very important matter that affects so many individuals giving and receiving medical care.

Sincerely,
Nicole Koller, RN

Sent from my iPhone 🌻

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Matthews, Meagan

From: agape@ticon.net
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:05 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Subject: Nurse losing her job due to mandatory flu vaccine.

Dear Rep.Thiesfeldt,

First I want to thank you for not giving up on the issue of mandatory flu shots. I work at a facility that has mandatory flu shots and I am no longer able to work there because I did not want the shot. I did take it last year- because I needed the job. There are many people at this facility who have told me that they would not take the shot if they were not going to lose their jobs for refusing it. Last year, all the residents at our long term care facility were vaccinated as well as the staff- and we still had cases of the flu in the facility. I am having a hard time finding new employment because there are so few facilities that do not require the shot. I truly resent, as an American citizen, being forced to inject my body with something in order to keep my job. It is especially difficult in light of vaccine pharma's history of not doing what is in the best interest of the populace. I have done my homework on this issue and am aware of the times that vaccines were known to be unsafe and still distributed to be injected to innocent, trusting, unsuspecting people. I have a very strong immune system and rarely get sick. I feel that it is my right to choose between the risks and benefits of any medical intervention- including a vaccine.

Thanks to you and your colleagues for your work on this issue. It truly is an important one. May God bless all of your for your efforts to restore our right to make this decision for ourselves- without coercion.

Sincerely,

Janine Curtin RN

(69)

I am writing this letter in the hope that you will support/cosponsor Draft LRB0020 (No Flu Shot Mandates for Healthcare Workers). I am enclosing supportive documentation that show there is little evidence that the influenza vaccine is effective and to respect the professional judgement of healthcare workers (HCWs).

Demicheli et al. (2004) in their meta-analysis of published studies determined that yearly recommended influenza vaccines had low effectiveness against clinical influenza cases, and minimally reduced lost work time. Geier, King, and Geier (2006) found between 1979 and 2000 the influenza vaccine had little or no effect over the U.S. population for preventing death rate, case rate, and rate of hospitalizations with influenza as the first-line discharge diagnosis. These researchers concluded universal immunization of healthy adults with influenza vaccine is not supported.

Cochrane Database System Review (updated July 2010) comparing 50 randomized controlled trial or quasi-trials comparing influenza with placebo or no intervention in healthy adults aged 16-65, vaccination had a modest effect on time off work and no effect on hospital admissions or complication rates such as pneumonia. Furthermore, a February 2010 review examined influenza vaccination of HCWs caring for individuals greater than age 60 and concluded there is no evidence that vaccinating HCWs prevents influenza in elderly residents in long term care facilities. The review was unable to find information on co-interventions with HCW vaccination such as hand washing, face masks when ill, early detection of laboratory-proven influenza, quarantine, avoiding admissions, anti-virals, and asking HCWs with influenza like illness not to work.

The American Academy of Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) cited in their letter to Colorado Public Health Officials (2011), "not aware of any studies of the relative risk of transmission by unimmunized workers compared with immunized workers who may have a subclinical, asymptomatic illness with viral shedding." Furthermore, if an outbreak were to occur of virulent influenza routine immunization will not be protective and has the potential to acutally increase susceptibility (Globe and Mail, Sept. 9, 2009, cited in Doctors for Disaster Preparedness Newsletter, September 2009). The AAPS also notes the mask requirement is "particularly unjustified." Those whom are vaccinated could transmit the influenza virus just as an

unvaccinated person (Dec. 2011). Additionally, other patients and family members not vaccinated or vaccinated that enter the hospital or clinic facility have the potential to spread the disease. The mask requirement seems to be "nothing more than a punitive retaliation against those who decline the vaccine" (Orient, J December 2011).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) believe there is insufficient scientific evidence for the federal government to promote mandatory influenza vaccination programs. They furthermore note the vaccine is no magic bullet and have seen no evidence that demonstrates a 90% vaccination rate strived for by Health People 2020 goals is in fact necessary (OSHA's Official Position on Flu Vaccination of Healthcare Workers January, 2012). They are convinced influenza vaccination is generally beneficial and are supportive of efforts to promote vaccination but exemptions should be allowed for HCWs for medical, religious, and personal objections.

If you need further information I encourage you to read:

Doshi, Peter. Influenza: marketing vaccine by marketing disease. BMJ 2013;346:f3037.
(<http://www.bmj.com/content/346/bmj.f3037>)

Effectiveness of Flu Vaccine Raises More Red Flags (<http://www.nvic.org/NVIC-Vaccine-News/March-2013/effectiveness-of-flu-vaccine-raises-more-red-flags.aspx>)

Labor Unions Oppose Mandatory Flu Shots as AMA Cherry-Picks Ethics to Endorse Vaccine Mandate

<http://www.nvic.org/NVIC-Vaccine-News/August-2012/labor-unions-oppose-mandatory-flu-shots-as-ama-che.aspx>

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

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Matthews, Meagan

From: Steve Meress <SMeress@foxvalleywellness.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:35 AM
To: Rep.Thiesfeldt
Attachments: Letter to Health Care Workers - Flu.docx

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt. I know you are interested and involved in mandatory vaccination requirements policies in WI and I applaud you in your desire to address this forced policy upon employees despite known complications from these vaccines. I am enclosing a letter through my Integrative Medicine group for your information. I think you may find it useful.

I also wanted to thank you for The Blue Book sent to my residence. Thank you again.
Sincerely

Steven Meress MD FACP ABHM, President and Owner
Fox Valley Wellness Center/Midwest Hyperbarics/Pure Reflections of Fox Valley
180 Knights Way
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
920-922-5433 877-676-5433
Fax 920-922-5422
smeress@foxvalleywellness.com
www.foxvalleywellness.com

Dear _____,

Thank you for contacting NVIC on this matter. We've been contacted by many health care workers, students, and professionals concerning the matter of mandatory vaccinations. We are now aware that there are many national organizations on record as opposing mandatory vaccines without flexible medical, religious and personal, philosophical, or conscientious belief exemptions. If you are a member of any of these organizations, you may be able to get assistance from local chapters in your area. Please use the following link for more information on these organizations. [Labor Unions Oppose Mandatory Flu Shots as AMA Cherry-Picks Ethics to Endorse Vaccine Mandates](#)

We keep much of the information we are providing to you today on our website at www.NVIC.org and update it regularly, as well as publish a free eNewsletter. If you do not already [receive our newsletter](#), joining is free and it is a good way to stay up-to-date on this issue. We also provide on our [state law webpages](#) information about health care worker vaccination requirements. Just click on a state and you will see a link to this information in our Quick Facts box.

NVIC's staff is working hard through the Advocacy Portal to help like-minded people in each state to protect their rights and prevent mandatory vaccination in their state. We encourage you to sign up for our [Advocacy Portal](#) and join with other like-minded grassroots activists working to protect and expand vaccine exemptions in your state. By signing up, you will be connected directly to your lawmakers and receive action alerts, newsletters, and tips so you can be an advocate for the right to informed consent in the vaccine decision-making process. Please make sure that you indicate that you are a health care worker opposing mandatory vaccines by marking yes in the appropriate section. Once you sign up at the NVIC Advocacy Portal you can access information specific to health care workers under the "National" tab found across the top of page.

The following links contain valuable information regarding the subject of health care workers and mandated flu shots:

- [NVAC Says: Mandate Flu Shots for Health Care Workers](#)
- [Why Influenza Vaccine Mandates are Ineffective & Unwise Public Policy](#)
- [Influenza Deaths: The Hype vs. The Evidence](#)
- [More NVIC Influenza Information & Articles](#)

You can visit NVIC's [Vaccine Freedom Wall](#) on our website and read stories from health care workers who are facing the same problem. We would like to encourage you to add your story to this wall. At least one of the health care workers on this page has started a petition in her facility to fight the system and many have succeeded in banning together to obtain exemptions.

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I work in the medical field and I do not feel that employers should be able to force us to receive the flu shot. There is no way to 100% guaranty that we're going to be protected from whatever strain is going around at a particular time and a lot of the things in the shot were not meant to be in the human body. As far as adverse effects, I was pregnant last year and less than a week after receiving the flu vaccine I went into premature labor and delivered my daughter 6 weeks early. They say there is no way to prove that the vaccine had anything to do with that but how can they prove to me that it didn't?

11/10/13

I hope the picture I sent to you will be a help to ban the mandatory flu shot. We were forced into having the shot or we would of been dismissed of our job duties. Well as you all can see some of us had a very bad reaction to it. This is not the AMERICAN way to force someone to put in their bodies and this be the result. Do the right thing and tell companies this is not right. This is not the AMERICAN way to treat people to force their thought's and beliefs on the and then threaten their livelyhood. It's wrong and UNAMERICAN. Thank you. Please pass this Bill. Americans are waiting for you to do the right thing!
Sinceley XXXX

Sent from my iPad

