

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Health  
For HB 1586

Compiled on: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 2:30 AM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

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Hearing Date: April 28, 2025 8:00 AM

Sandra Abmayr, Dr.  
self retired psychologist  
Spring, TX

I strongly oppose HB1586. It weakens the responsibility that our government has to protect the community. If we populate the schools with large number of unvaccinated children, we will increase the number of dangerous infection diseases that will spread among our children. Science has proven that vaccination is the safest way to prevent this. We should not turn our backs on years of scientific progress. This does not infringe on parent's rights; there is already a method for them to opt out for legitimate reasons. We have to also protect the right of parents who wish to send their children to a school that is a safe environment. Thus, I urge you to vote NP TO HB 1586

Maria Gutierrez, Ms.  
Self  
Spring, TX

I fully support this bill as it defends the medical freedom parents choose for their children.

Whitney Gormley  
Concerned parent  
Houston, TX

Given the current measles outbreak in our state, I am concerned about anything which would make it easier to get school exemptions. As evidenced by the outbreak, it is already easy enough to exempt children from the school-required vaccines.

Melinda Roberts  
Self  
San Antonio, TX

I'm asking the committee to vote in favor of HB 1586

Teresa Thomas  
Texas Moms for America  
Tomball, TX

In Favor

Lisa Barber  
Self  
Austin, TX  
Opposed to HB 1586

Jennifer Uzzell, Dr.  
self  
Magnolia, TX

My name is Jennifer Uzzell, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make it easier to obtain non-medical exemptions from school-required vaccines.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

As a pediatric nurse practitioner, I know firsthand that vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates, leading to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Uzzell  
Magnolia, Texas

Jillian Losh, Dr.  
Self, scientist  
Houston, TX

It would be a danger to the Texas public to not require immunizations for school enrollment. This anti-vaccination stance is unacceptable.

Phil Bohart  
Self  
Dallas, TX

Please pass this bill allowing parents to print exemption forms, save taxpayer dollars, and keep Texas kids in schools.

Thank you,  
Phil Bohart

Sarah Swindell  
Self  
Cypress, TX

As the parent of a severely vaccine injured child, having the option to exempt is critical to his, and so many others who have adverse reaction to vaccines. These people should be allowed to participate in school and not be discriminated in the workplace as well.

Michael Belsick  
Fredericksburg Tea Party  
Fredericksburg, TX  
FOR HB 1586

Angela Smith  
Fredericksburg Tea Party/Self, Guest House Owner and Operator  
Fredericksburg, TX

Thank you Rep Hull for filing this bill. I am very much for this bill and look forward to it passing favorably out of committee.

MARCUS HENRY  
Self; Parent, Data & AI Engineering  
WAXAHACHIE, TX

Vote YES. Having to request this form every couple years is a waste of taxpayer funds. The forms can easily be printed from the internet.

Shaheen Ansri  
Self  
Houston, TX

My name is Shaheen and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586 which would allow non-medical exemptions from school required vaccinations to be easily obtained. The bill promotes unnecessary harm and does not uphold freedom. Vaccine's are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of deadly, contagious and dangerous diseases. High exemption rates will permit low vaccination rates which can have deadly consequences as evidenced in Texas with the deaths of children and with 650 cases of measles outbreaks. Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reason's including cancer victims and those with compromised immune systems. I sincerely urge members of the House Public Committee to oppose this bill. Please support and vote for policies that protect this vulnerable and precious population and future citizens of our state and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements. Thank you for the privilege of your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,  
Shaheen Ansari  
Houston, Texas

Amanda Rios-Place  
self  
Spring, TX

I am against this bill because it would allow anyone to obtain an affidavit for an exemption from immunizations, regardless of parental/guardian status, without having to provide any information. This would endanger all students, especially as Texas is amid a growing measles outbreak due to under immunization.

marion Forbes, Dr.  
Texas Pediatric Society member, pediatric hospitalist and mother  
Austin, TX

Vaccines for children are one of the greatest medical accomplishments of the last 100 years, highly effective and life changing in their positive impact. Side effects are minimal and far far outweighed by the benefits. The current texas measles outbreak is the latest evidence against efforts to diminish vaccine mandates for Texas children. This bill is foolish and dangerous. The current anti vax movement has no basis in scientific evidence and harms children. As a 34 year pediatrician I have seen the negative consequences of vaccine hesitancy and vaccine refusal. These infectious diseases are dangerous. Please vote against this bill for the sake of children.

Earl Kubin  
Self  
Atlanta, TX

Please pass HB1586, HB4076 and HB4535. Thank you.

Stacie Matson

Self

Boerne, TX

Testimony in Support of HB 1586

By Stacie Matson, Resident of Congressional District 23 and Senate District 25

I am writing today to express my strong support for House Bill 1586. As a parent of a profoundly autistic son, I have been completing exemption forms for over 20 years. In my experience, this is a burdensome and outdated process that could easily be simplified with modern technology.

Currently, parents must order exemption forms by mail, track when they are received, and remember that they are only valid for two years. This system is not only inefficient but leads to unnecessary waste—I've often had to reorder forms simply because I lost track of expiration dates. The amount of time, effort, and taxpayer money spent on printing, mailing, and processing these forms is unnecessary in this digital age.

Allowing parents to download or submit exemption forms online would make this process significantly more manageable and accessible. It would also result in meaningful cost savings for the state of Texas—especially in reduced postage and printing costs.

To me, HB 1586 is a no-brainer. It modernizes a simple bureaucratic process, reduces taxpayer burden, and supports families like mine. I urge the Legislature to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Stacie Matson

Resident, Congressional District 23 / Senate District 25

ADELITA CANTU

Immunize Coalition San Antonio

San Antonio, TX

Dear Members of the Texas House of Representatives Public Health Committee

As Chair of the Immunize Coalition San Antonio, I am writing to express our coalition's strong opposition to House Bill 1586, which seeks to loosen the regulations surrounding immunization exemptions. This bill represents a dangerous step backward for public health in our state and places our most vulnerable citizens, including infants, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals, at unnecessary risk.

Vaccination requirements are a cornerstone of effective public health policy. They are not only critical for protecting individual health but are vital for maintaining community (herd) immunity or the level of immunization necessary to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. The current now nationwide measles epidemic is reflective of what happens without sufficient community immunity. Weakening immunization standards would erode this immunity, potentially leading to outbreaks of diseases once thought to be under control, such as measles, whooping cough, and mumps.

The evidence is clear: States with more lenient exemption policies experience higher rates of vaccine-preventable diseases. Furthermore, allowing broader exemptions undermines trust in science and public health leadership at a time when misinformation is already causing measurable harm to community health.

Parents certainly have the right to make informed decisions regarding their children's health. However, that right does not extend to making decisions that endanger the health and safety of others. Schools, childcare centers, and other communal environments rely on vaccination to protect all children, especially those who cannot be vaccinated for legitimate medical reasons.

We must prioritize public health and community safety over convenience or ideology. I respectfully urge you to reject House Bill 1586 and to uphold strong immunization policies that protect all members of our society. The health of our communities depends on it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Adelita G. Cantu, PhD, RN, FAAN

Chair, Immunization Coalition San Antonio

Ruth York  
Self - Direct Sales  
Cisco, TX

I SUPPORT HB 1586. It requires the TX Department of State Health Services to post the vaccine exemption form online in a downloadable and printable format. It also prohibits retention of personally identifiable information from being collected by the state. Please vote YES on HB 1586.

Amanda McKinney  
Self  
Cypress, TX

I support this bill. Vote yes! Thank you!

Alvin Terry  
Self  
SPRING, TX

This legislation does nothing to further public health or empower parents. Please reject this attempt to push Texas closer to vaccine preventable outbreaks.

Lauren Bohart, Mrs.  
self  
Dallas, TX

It would be very convenient for parents/caregivers to have the ability to print the necessary vaccine exemption forms from home instead of having to request them from the state first. This would decrease any delays for enrollment and would allow kids who are already enrolled to be able to stay in school.

Carla Haramboure  
Self  
Houston, TX

Making it easier for parents not to vaccinate their children is not a good thing. Preventable diseases shouldn't be killing and gravely sickening our children. These are life saving vaccines. Please also keep in mind there are many who cannot legitimately be vaccinated, who have cancer, who are on immunosuppressants, who depend on those around them to be vaccinated. Please do not push this bill forward.

Amanda Wood

self, sales

Arlington, TX

My name is Amanda Wood and I writing in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines much easier to obtain.

This bill **DOES NOT** uphold freedom. Far from it. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools available in the medical community to prevent the spread of dangerous, serious, and sometimes **DEADLY** infectious disease. Diseases that until recently were effectively eliminated from the US because of the use of school required vaccines. However, high exemption rates mean low vaccination rates and can lead to outbreaks of these serious diseases. We are seeing the proof of this right now with the ongoing measles outbreak across many counties in the state of Texas. This outbreak is the direct result of falling vaccination rates of the MMR vaccine which is facilitated by non-medical exemptions being easier to obtain.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions further increases the risk to children who cannot be vaccinated for actual medical reasons, like those kids who are battling cancer or have compromised immune systems.

I am writing to **URGE** members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. I beg you to support policies that actively support the health of our children and maintain the integrity of our school immunization requirements. Doing so is a step to try and help reduce the potential for further outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases and recognize the value that this important intervention has in protecting everyone.

Thank you for your time and attention on this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Amanda Wood

Arlington, TX

Meredith Yuskiw

Self, self-employed

Austin, TX

The bill should be **OPPOSED**. This is the wrong bill to pass when there is a deadly measles outbreak happening in Texas -- two children have died unnecessarily from the measles. The more people who are infected, the more likely it is that there will be additional fatalities from the disease. This bill is also redundant since parents have other ways to opt out of their children getting vaccinated. I believe that vaccines have become victims of their success -- those opposed to vaccines do not understand what they are unleashing when the Texas populations' herd immunity decreases, maybe they think they will be fine if they are unvaccinated but it's only because they are leaning heavily on the rest of us who do get vaccinated. Some people are too ill to receive vaccines and they will only be protected from diseases like measles, whooping cough, etc., if the rest of the population who can get vaccinated does get vaccinated. Vulnerable people will die because some are too selfish and uneducated to realize what they are doing by not getting their children vaccinated.

Katherine Gonzalez, R.N.

Santa Maria ISD

Weslaco, TX

As a School Nurse I oppose this bill.

Rachel Bryant

MIDLOTHIAN ISD

Midlothian, TX

**OPPOSE**

Caroline Davis

Self

Round Rock, TX

I ask you to vote **YES** in support not medical freedom

Kathy Regan  
self - school nurse  
Garden Ridge, TX  
OPPOSE

Kathryn Wright, MD  
self, Pediatrician  
Kingwood, TX

My name is Kathryn Wright, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Wright, MD  
Kingwood, TX

Susan Hall  
self, retired  
Austin, TX

If the current rising status of measles cases in Texas due in large part to unvaccinated children and adults have not taught us a lesson on the importance of vaccinations, what will? School children should be required to be vaccinated and current on all vaccinations. Those states with mandatory vaccinations for entering school children are not facing the measles crisis that we are in Texas. Because of our already relaxed laws on vaccinations, our communities are exposed to diseases we once thought were eradicated. Shame on us and shame on you for wanting to make this health care crisis in Texas even worse. VOTE NO on this bill. It is crucial for our state's health system.

Wendy Hein, RN  
self - School Nurse  
Midlothian, TX

OPPOSE - As a school nurse, this bill SCARES me. Making it this easy for parents to NOT vaccinate their child would impact public health. In order for vaccines to work, there needs to be over 70% population with the vaccination. The resurgence of the HIGHLY PREVENTABLE Measles is a clear example. We will start to see more conditions come back as less and less of the population do not vaccinate. Study your history. Do you know what Polio did to students? Do you know the side effects of some of these diseases are?

James Gallagher  
Self  
Jonestown, TX

It's utter stupidity to relax vaccination requirements during a measles outbreak in Texas. Are you testing Darwin's theory with the goal of weeding out dingbats from the population?

Ronnie Gatlin

SELF

Italy, TX

I support this Bill.

Beverly Gatlin

Self

Italy, TX

I support this Bill.

Karen Starnes

TMF/Self

Fort Worth, TX

This is an important step in advancing medical freedom in Texas. It will also cost less and update the exemption process in Texas.

Leigh Wilcox

Self - Homemaker

Frisco, TX

Online vaccination exemption forms which parents can access, download and print on their own would be a win-win for parents and the state. It would make the process so much easier for families and would do the same for the state, plus it would save the state money, alleviating the need to pay to print and mail forms to all families requesting exemptions. I fully support this bill.

Rachel Bowes

Self, Administrative Assistant

Austin, TX

I fully support expediting the process of getting an immunization exemption, being able to print it out instead of waiting for it to be sent via mail. Would be even better if we have what Idaho has, to be able to simply write out our own simple exemption, no interaction with the government needed at all. But, to be able to print the without restriction is better than the current process. Thank you for your time and have a good day.

Tamara Berger

self

Seguin, TX

As a parent it is extremely important for me to be able to have an option to exempt my kids from vaccinations or other courses, mental health evaluations, etc. It is my right as a parent to be informed and opt out of things I don't think are helpful for my kids. Having the ability to fill out an exemption form online is easy and practical. Please make sure this goes through. Parental determination should be as easy as possible. It should not be difficult for a parent to express their consent or desire to opt out.

Carol Daley, Mrs

Self

Arlington, TX

Hello,

As a taxpayer, I think it is important that we allow people to print forms via online sources at any opportunity vs spending tax money to mail. If someone wants an exemption, they are going to get it one way or the other – you're not going to deter them by requiring them to wait on a form you mail. Please vote yes on this bill! It is just common sense and fiscally appropriate!



Jackie Besinger  
National Alliance for Education Freedom  
Austin, TX

In Favor, this should continue to be the right of all citizens as our God given rights.

Courtney Albright  
Self  
Richmond, TX

Support this legislation. Please defend informed consent, transparency, and parental rights.

Danuel Bradford, Dr.  
Self  
Austin, TX

I am a physician concerned about the welfare of Texans. The data show that vaccines are safe and effective. This has been demonstrated literally billions of times over. We need not look far back to see what life was like before vaccines. What's happening in West Texas is nothing less than a tragedy. I agree that vaccine mandates are about freedom - freedom for Texans to live without fear of contracting a preventable, debilitating illness. I urge you to please put aside the politics of the moment and elevate science. Please direct the effort needed to pass this bill to legislation that will improved the lives of Texans. I appreciate your time and attention to this matter, and for your service to our State.

Jesse Parr  
Self  
Bryan, TX

I am an old pediatrician who has experienced the positive impact of childhood vaccines on these now vaccine preventable diseases. It is very important that vaccine rates stay high in the population for the vaccines to be optimally effective. None of the vaccines are 100 % effective and depending upon how contagious an individual infecting virus or bacteria is the percentage of the population required to be vaccinated varies. Measles and pertussis are the most infectious (contagious) and thus are the first illnesses to emerge as the percentage of children vaccinated drops. There is great evidence of the effectiveness of these vaccines. The risk of serious vaccine adverse events is very low-actually less than the risk of being struck by lightning, but not zero but the benefit far exceeds the risk. I tell families that they had greater risk of being involved in a serious motor vehicle accident while driving to my office than the risk of the vaccine. We make benefit:risk analyses daily. Making it easier to obtain exemption will lower vaccination rates and soon other now vaccine preventable diseases will emerge. Please do not make it easier to obtain vaccine exemption. I would love to have the opportunity to address committee if possible but please consider my concerns.

Rebecca Hardy  
Texans for Vaccine Choice  
Keller, TX

This bill is a common-sense measure that would provide relief to families burdened by a process that is currently lengthy, intrusive, and confusing.

First, the current process is lengthy. Right now, once a parent submits a request online, it can take up to 10 days just to receive the necessary forms in the mail. Even worse, the confirmation screen that pops up after submitting a request admits requests may not be processed at all due to frequent technical issues.

The process is also unnecessarily intrusive. Parents must submit their own name, email address, and phone number, their child's full name, date of birth, and mailing address. That data is retained electronically—even if not actively tracked. This bill would ensure that families can access their legal rights without handing over excessive personal information.

The system is also confusing. TFVC regularly receives pleas from Texas families needing help just to navigate the exemption process. We even created a dedicated webpage to explain all the ins and out of Texas exemption laws. That shouldn't be necessary for something this simple.

As a result, children are missing school. For example:

- \*A family who moves to Texas mid-school year cannot request an affidavit form until they have a Texas mailing address and cannot enroll their children in school while waiting to have their affidavit request processed and forms mailed.

- \*When students transfer schools, affidavits frequently don't follow, forcing parents to start the request process again, but in the meantime their children are excluded from school.

- \*Numerous parents have reported to TFVC that the technical issues that DSHS warns about are quite real. They request the form multiple times and never receive it in time, leaving their children out of class.

These are real stories from Texas families—and there are many more like them. All of these absences are avoidable with a more efficient system.

To be clear: this bill does not change who qualifies for exemptions. It simply ensures parents can access their legal rights without unnecessary barriers. Texans are not required to prove their deeply held beliefs for other medical procedures. The current process adds needless hurdles that exclude children from school. Please vote YES on this simple, streamlined solution.

Robyn Carlyle  
Self  
Kingwood, TX

My name is Robyn Carlyle, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586. The current measles outbreak has already taken the lives of two children, and this bill — which would make non-medical exemptions to school vaccination requirements easier to obtain — would leave our communities even more vulnerable to disease outbreaks.

Vaccines are one of the best tools we have to keep us healthy, but they aren't perfect. Not everyone vaccinated will be fully protected against diseases, but if enough people are vaccinated, we can lower the risk of disease for everyone. History has shown time and time again that higher immunization rates lead to lower incidence of disease. But this bill would weaken vaccination coverage and leave our schools open to more costly, deadly outbreaks.

This bill is not about freedom. It's not about freedom of choice — families have already had the option to opt out of school-required vaccines for a long time. And it's certainly not about freedom of health, as this bill would threaten the lives of our most vulnerable children. There are children in our schools who can't get vaccinated because they're undergoing cancer treatment or are immune compromised — circumstances that make getting sick that much more dangerous. They depend on those around them to be vaccinated to keep them safe. Their health matters. Their lives matter. And they deserve to go to school and make friends and be part of our communities. This bill would make it harder for them to do that safely.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of all our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Robyn Carlyle  
Kingwood, TX

Kenneth Cohen, Dr  
Self Pediatrician  
Houston, TX

My name is Kenneth Cohen, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

There is no question in my mind that if this bill passes, it will cause increased hospitalizations and deaths from preventable childhood diseases, especially measles and whooping cough.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Kenneth Cohen

Houston, Texas

Lisa Rozean, BSN, RN  
All Saints Episcopal School  
Lubbock, TX

My name is Lisa Rozean, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school-required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom—it promotes unnecessary harm. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

We are seeing the consequences of low vaccination rates play out in real time, as Texas faces a deadly measles outbreak. High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates, which increase the risk of outbreaks in schools and communities.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions:

Jeopardizes the health of medically vulnerable students, including those with cancer or weakened immune systems.

Undermines public trust in vaccines by removing safeguards like consultation with medical professionals.

Lowers community immunity, increasing the spread of preventable diseases.

Strains school personnel and health systems, requiring more exclusions, notifications, and emergency responses.

Disrupts families, as parents miss work to care for children who are sick or excluded due to outbreaks.

Moves Texas away from national best practices in public health and school safety.

Texas already allows medical and conscientious exemptions. HB 1586 goes too far by removing oversight and encouraging misuse.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose HB 1586. Please support policies that protect our children and uphold the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Ashton Tassin

Self

Dallas, TX

My name is Ashton and I am commenting to express my vehement opposition to HB 1586, which would recklessly make non-medical exemptions even easier to obtain than they already are. There is an uncontained measles outbreak harming west Texas and vaccine rates continue to decline state-wide, exposing the most medically vulnerable to unnecessary harm and higher likelihood of preventable-disease outbreaks. This bill jeopardizes community immunity; vaccines protect those who cannot be vaccinated due to medical conditions. Expanding exemptions based on misinformation undermines public health and legitimizes dangerous falsehoods. Unvaccinated individuals can transmit diseases to those who lack the privilege of choice. Outbreaks strain healthcare systems, force school closures, and burden families with avoidable medical costs. Texas risks legal liability if preventable outbreaks harm vulnerable residents. Protect Texas children, families, and the progress we've made against preventable diseases--I urge members of this committee to oppose this bill. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Ashton Tassin

Dallas TX

Erica Saenz

self

Gonzales, TX

support

Tamika Kennedy

ALIEF ISD

HOUSTON, TX

My name is Tamika Kennedy, and I am a School Nurse. I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

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Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Tamika Kennedy

Houston, TX

Erica Saenz

Self

Gonzales, TX

Oppose

Judith Smith  
City of Port Arthur  
Port Arthur, TX

As a public health official and former immunization nurse, now serving as a health director, I strongly oppose allowing parents to opt out of childhood vaccinations for non-medical reasons. Throughout my career, I have witnessed firsthand the consequences of undervaluing immunization, having worked through two measles outbreaks that put countless lives at risk. My convictions are deeply rooted in both professional experience and personal history—I went to school with children who were permanently crippled by polio, a preventable disease. These experiences have reinforced my belief that vaccines are not only a critical tool in protecting individual health but also essential to safeguarding entire communities.

Roy Adrian Clarke  
Self, Pediatrician  
Dallas, TX

My name is R. Adrian Clarke, MD. I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

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I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

R. Adrian Clarke, MD

DALLAS, TX

Roger Hall  
Self & We the People - Liberty in Action  
Ingram, TX  
Support and pass out of committee

Teri Huneycutt  
Self  
Plano, TX

Please support HB 1586 to facilitate a parent's choice to choose whether his or her child should get a vaccine and still be able to enroll in public school.

Brenda Hill, Public Health Specialist  
Hardin County Health Services  
Batson, TX

My name is [Brenda Hill], and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

NAME

CITY/TOWN

Batson, TX

Amber Meredith  
Hardin County Health Services  
SILSBEE, TX

My name is Amber Meredith, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements. I am a public Health employee, however my biggest factor for opposing this bill is due to being a parent of two boys as well. As a nurse and a mother I beg you to not pass this bill for the safety of all Texas Children.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Amber Meredith, RN

Silsbee

Angie Cummings, Dr.  
Self / Assistant professor in public health  
Austin, TX

As a concerned citizen, a parent, and a person with a master's and a doctorate in public health, I strongly oppose HB1586. Safe and effective vaccines keep our communities safe and protect us from illness and death. Please do not pass this bill as it will lead to more outbreaks like we are experiencing now with this measles outbreak that has resulted in the death of 2 children so far.

There are already procedures to opt out of vaccines for religious and medical reasons. Thank you for keeping our children and our communities safe and healthy by NOT passing this bill.

Daniel Osborn, Mr.  
Self, Project Manager  
Richmond, TX

Hello, I am writing to OPPOSE HB 1586. I am a father of two school-age children and I value healthy schools and communities. Seeing the sad effects of measles in West Texas is a scary reminder of what can happen when vaccination rates decline. We do not need to make it easier for parents to exempt their child from school required vaccines. Parents can already decide to do this if that is their choice, but let's not make it even easier by allowing the form to be downloaded, saved and shared indefinitely. I hope the state legislature will oppose this bill and stand up to protect the health and well-being of our schools and communities. We don't want more disease outbreaks in our state.

Catherine Donery Cooksley, Dr.  
Texas Public Health Association  
Galveston, TX

This bill and any time wasted on it seems counterproductive especially during this time of one of the largest measles outbreaks in decades! It is already much too easy for parents to opt out of vaccinating their children! Stop wasting taxpayers time and money on such useless banter!

Jenn Sherry Parry  
MYSELF  
driftwood, TX

I SUPPORT THIS 1000000%.

Lisa Formby  
school nurses  
HEREFORD, TX

I oppose this bill. It makes it too easy to NOT have to be immunized or provide a record for school enrollment. The people who are registering them do not know the importance of being vaccinated, how hard it is to get parents to take their children to receive their currently needed vaccines once they are enrolled in school and tells parents that public education does not care whether they are vaccinated. With the measles outbreak currently in progress I would think anyone that cares about public health would vote no to the bill.

Kara DeLay, R.N.  
Self-School Nurse  
Atlanta, TX  
Oppose

Lucas Massey  
Self, Student  
New Braunfels, TX

My name is Lucas Massey, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Lucas Massey  
New Braunfels, TX

Jeremiah Massey  
self, student  
New Braunfels, TX

My name is Jeremiah, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Massey  
New Braunfels, TX



Michelle Massey  
self, Academic Advisor  
New Braunfels, TX

My name is Michelle Massey, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Michelle Massey

New Braunfels, TX

Kenneth Coleman  
City of Beaumont Public Health  
Beaumont, TX

My name is Kenneth Coleman, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school-required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Kenneth

Beaumont

#immunizations #vaccines #publichealth

Joel Massey  
Self, physician  
New Braunfels, TX

My name is Joel Massey, I am a practicing primary care physician and community health advocate, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

I do not agree with the premise of this bill--Texans have the right to be protected by government from preventable disease. In public schools where our vulnerable children learn and play, and where many vulnerable adults work in close proximity to children, we should be allowed to expect attendees to have the respect for one another's health and well being by adhering to safe, proven, and recommended disease preventive measures, the most effective of which is vaccination.

It is well-understood that increased exemption from vaccination requirements leads to increased disease outbreaks. Texas leads the nation in measles cases from an outbreak that was completely preventable if a stronger pro-vaccination stance was encouraged from public officials, and the outbreak is causing great cost to Texan lives and livelihood as the health, hospitalization, and economic impact of this epidemic soars. This statistic is not something elected officials should view as an acceptable leading role for Texas among other states. Permitting additional non-medical exemptions endangers students and the adults who help them learn, especially those who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children (or adults) with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and adults; maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Please hear the voices of your constituents on this critical issue, but also please listen to the voice of overwhelmingly logical reason.

Sincerely,

Joel Massey, MD  
New Braunfels, TX

Joshua Hightower, Mr  
self - college student  
Houston, TX

I am Joshua Hightower, and I vote in every Harris County election. I'm writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm. It would cause harm to countless children who can't get vaccines, including my best friend. He relies on his community to help protect him because vaccines do not work for him given his serious medical condition.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak, with our children dying for no good reason.

If life is important to you, then you should support it by supporting vaccines.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Joshua Hightower  
Klein, TX

Donald Hightower, Mr  
self - attorney  
Houston, TX

My name is Donald Hightower, and I vote in Harris County. I'm writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm. It would cause harm to countless children who can't get vaccines - which includes my son's best friend. He has a chronic illness that renders vaccines useless. His only protection is from eradicating the diseases through vaccines or herd immunity – also achieved through vaccines.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak, wherein our children are literally dying for no good reason.

You cannot say you are in favor of life and then make it easier to children to die by making vaccines easier to skip.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Donald Hightower  
Klein, TX

Victoria Abmayr, Ms  
self - registered behavioral therapist and full time student  
Houston, TX

I'm writing in strong opposition to HB 1586. My name is Victoria Abmayr, and I vote! HB 1586 would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm. It would cause harm to countless children who can't get vaccines - which includes my future brother in law. He literally relies on his community for protection of his health and wellbeing. Why would you make that easier - especially when there is no science linking vaccines to autism. And I know autism because my clinic treats them exclusively.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak. Children are literally dying for no good reason.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Victoria Abmayr  
Klein, TX

Priyanka Bhatia

Self

Tomball, TX

Students need to be vaccinated against basic things like mmr otherwise we will continue to have outbreaks in our state

Angela Orgeron

Self-School Nurse Leader

KINGWOOD, TX

OPPOSE-This bill prioritizes convenience over safety. While immunization for school is a choice in Texas (as I believe it should be), making it easy to download and print an objection form defeats the purpose of having objections at all. If all a person needs to do is download and sign, then it is simply an extra piece of paper documentation for school nurses. Why require an objection form at all? Having to order the form from the state and then have it notarized continues to allow the form to be accessible but not on demand. Having the form available on demand, will decrease the number of school age students with up to date vaccine records and potentially increase the risk of spreading vaccine preventable illnesses in schools unnecessarily. If a parent is objecting to vaccines with thought and consideration of pros and cons and still choosing not to obtain vaccines, it is not a spur of the moment decision and they would have had time to prepare for school enrollment by requesting appropriate forms. With this download option, those parents not prepared and not necessarily objecting to the vaccine schedule will print this form to avoid meeting requirements for school enrollment when they have no objection to vaccines. In the case of disease outbreak, more students will need to be excluded from school due to risk of transmission because of this convenient option. Ultimately this affects the safety and education of the students of Texas in a negative way. Please oppose this bill and continue to have parents request objection forms through the state request system.

Barbara Harless

self

Murphy, TX

I support HB 1586 to defend Texans' medical liberty. Vaccines can and do cause harm. Where there is risk, there MUST be choice.

Gema Nieves

Self

Houston, TX

Protect the people. In passing this bill you will be endangering our children and our most vulnerable populations.

Janine Abmayr, Ms  
Self - market research professional  
Houston, TX

My name is Janine Abmayr, and I'm a regular voter in Texas. I'm writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm. My son's best friend has an illness that renders vaccines less than effective for him. He relies on herd immunity to survive. If we make vaccines easier to skip, his life will literally be in danger. And for what? In support of ignoring science?! If you believe in life, you should oppose this bill!

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Janine Abmayr  
Klein, TX

Ooma Lakshmanan  
Self  
Houston, TX

My name is Ooma Lakshmanan and I oppose strongly to HB 1586. As a grandmother I would like this bill to go away. Nobody is against freedom, parents already have opted out due to health reasons. High exemption rates causes low vaccines rates which would cause more harm to all. I urge the House Public House Committee to oppose this bill. Kindly support bills that will protect the health of our children and support the maintain the integrity of our school immunization requirements.

Pamela Trest  
self, retired  
Houston, TX

My name is Pamela Trest, ad I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

Unborn children are at risk of debilitating disabilities if the mother has not been immunized. However, babies whose mothers were vaccinated before pregnancy are protected for the first six months of life.

Texas schools are funded using daily average attendance. Large absences caused by infectious diseases will cause poor academic outcomes and financial losses forcing communities to raise property taxes to cover budget shortfalls.

Managing disease outbreaks strains local and state health budgets.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for you time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Trest  
Houston

Mona Currey  
Self Realtor  
Spring, TX

My name is Mona Currey and I'm writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Mona Currey  
Spring, TX

Christina Milan  
Self - Accountant  
Cypress, TX

I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to Texas HB 1586, which seeks to expand exemptions from required immunizations for school enrollment and poses significant public health risks. By making it easier to claim exemptions, the bill undermines herd immunity, leaving vulnerable populations—such as infants, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems—at greater risk of preventable diseases. Additionally, it could lead to outbreaks of illnesses that were previously under control, jeopardizing the health and safety of entire communities. Public policy should prioritize the well-being of all citizens, and this bill fails to do so. This could have far-reaching negative consequences in both education and the economy. In education, the bill's expansion of immunization exemptions may lead to increased outbreaks of preventable diseases in schools, causing higher absenteeism among students and staff. This disruption can hinder academic progress and place additional strain on school resources, such as the need for emergency health measures or temporary closures.

Finally, from an economic perspective, outbreaks of preventable diseases could increase healthcare costs for families and the state, as well as reduce workforce productivity due to illness. Businesses may face challenges if employees need to take time off to care for sick children or recover themselves. Additionally, the perception of a less safe public health environment could deter families and businesses from relocating to Texas, potentially impacting the state's economic growth and competitiveness. Public health policies that prioritize community well-being are essential for maintaining a thriving educational and economic ecosystem.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children, and the community at-large. I ask that you maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Christina Milan  
Cypress, Texas

Sharon Samson

Retired

Houston, TX

TIP Call to Action

April 2025

Points for Public Comments re: HB 1586

My name is Sharon Samson, and I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sharon S Samson

Houston

Ann Marie Barmore

Self

Spring, TX

A study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, released last summer, found the immunization of children born between 1994 and 2023 have saved the United States \$540 billion by preventing illness and costly hospitalizations as well as preventing more than 1.1 million deaths.

A study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, released last summer, found the immunization of children born between 1994 and 2023 have saved the United States \$540 billion by preventing illness and costly hospitalizations as well as preventing more than 1.1 million deaths.

FOR THESE REASONS THIS BILL AND COMPANION BILLS SHOULD NOT NEVER PASS.

Teresa Marti-Lopez

Self and Retired

Houston, TX

My name is [Teresa Marti-Lopez]and I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Teresa Marti-Lopez

Houston

Stephanie Goldman

Self

Houston, TX

My name is Stephanie Goldman, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

I am a retired school teacher and worry about the health risk exposure to my fellow teachers and all the innocent students, when we can prevent it with perfectly sensible and safe vaccinations.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. We should use them and encourage others to.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Goldman

Concerned Retired Texas Educator

wei-cheng FAN, RN

self/school nurse

Austin, TX

oppose the bill

Becky Green, R. Ph.

Self, Pharmacist

Lake Jackson, TX

I am in favor of this bill, which merely allows people the convenience of downloading and printing a vaccine exemption form at home. There are a number of legitimate reasons why a person may not be able to receive a required vaccine, but Texans are having difficulty getting access to the exemption form. This bill will save employee time and printing expenses for schools and government, make access far easier for parents and students, and save students time missed in class waiting for overworked personnel to dig up a physical copy of the form. It's a win-win for both schools and students! The only reason anyone would oppose this bill would be a desire to roadblock students from exercising their legal right to claim an immunization exemption. Please cut out the red tape and pass HB 1586.



Daniel Freedman, Dr  
self  
Austin, TX

My name is Dr Daniel Freedman, and I am a pediatric neurologist writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

We are witnessing one of the worst measles outbreaks in decades right here in Texas, in part because of the increase in vaccine exemptions over the years.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. I have seen what vaccine preventable diseases can do to children.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to more disease outbreaks. This in turn will lead to more deaths.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including many of my patients who have cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Daniel Freedman, DO

Emily Clement  
Self / Retired Librarian  
Bellaire, TX

My name is Emily Clement and I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks among all people in a society. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems as well as vulnerable adults.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Emily Clement  
Bellaire, TX

Deanna Akin  
Self  
Double Oak, TX  
Support

Theresa Malone

Self

Houston, TX

My name is Theresa Malone, and I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Theresa Malone

Houston, TX

Gayla Wilson, RN

Self- School Nurse

Marion, TX

Please OPPOSE this bill. The volume of exemptions have been rising over recent years. This places students and teachers at increased risk of exposure and for students and staff with chronic conditions this impacts their health safety at schools. For many, it is convenient to opt for an exemption over taking responsibility to immunize and maintain records for their children. They may or may not understand the sequelae. The current process allows information to be shared and a possible discussion to occur. It is currently a timely turnaround. The ultimate responsibility is not for the school to maintain the only records. That lies with parents/guardians. It is our responsibility to educate ALL students in a safe environment. That includes one with properly immunized students/classmates. Please OPPOSE this bill.

Erin Farmer

Self

Houston, TX

My name is Erin Farmer, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill promotes unnecessary harm and will cost Texas both money and lives.

Vaccines are the most effective tool we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. They save millions of dollars in healthcare costs and prevent untold amounts human suffering.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak and increasing cases of whooping cough.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems. Additionally, perfectly healthy children may have family members that could be at severe risk if vaccine-preventable diseases are brought home.

I implore members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of Texas's children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements. We will all suffer if this bill moves out of committee.

Sincerely,

Erin Willis Farmer

Houston

Christine Hughey  
Self  
Friendswood, TX

This is insanity. Immunizations should be required. Period. Measles and mumps were a thing of the past.

Trina Taylor Swisher  
Self  
Spring, TX

My name is Dr. Trina Taylor , and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely  
Trina Taylor Swisher MD

L. Granato, RN  
TSNO/School Nurse  
San Antonio, TX

OPPOSE!!

Shannon Baker, RN  
Self-School RN  
San Marcos, TX

Opposed. Many parents don't take there children to see a Doctor annually unless they are told that their child must be vaccinated to come to school. Having them go see a doctor allows opportunities for these children to get preventative care or to address other health concerns. Vaccinations prevent illness, reduce school absences, lower medical/hospitalization needs thus reducing overcrowding in medical facilities, decreased health care costs, better utilization of resources, unnecessary visits to ER/Urgent Care, decreased spread of illnesses, etc. Those who truly don't want to vaccinate their child for medical or religious purposes do research how to get exclusion from vaccinations required to enter school. Those who are just trying to get their child into a school as soon as possible will most likely just grab a more readily available form and fill it out just to get their child into the school. As a school RN, I spend my entire school year trying to get students caught up on vaccinations who are allowed to enroll based on a provision (foster kid, military parent, catch up vaccination schedule). A majority of the parents don't take their child to see the Dr annually for preventative care and therefore are not going to take their child to get vaccinated at a later date if they sign a form denying vaccines at this time. Having the school nurse review vaccinations and communicate with parents which vaccines have not been administered allows education to go towards the parents, improves chances of preventative care, and decreases the spread of illness in the clinic/daycares and out in the community. A majority of the population are not against vaccination, but those who are trying to register their child into a school, will fill out that form to enroll them, but then won't remember to go back and actually get their child vaccinated.

Jake Kaminski, MD

self

Katy, TX

My name is Jake Kaminski. I am a pediatrician, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Children rely on the adults in their world to keep them healthy and safe. HB 1586 will make children less safe.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. Many of these diseases for which we have no effective treatment.

Vaccines are also safe and by far the most scrutinized medication ever created. The medical community's claims of safety and effectiveness are backed by decades of independently repeated research. Claims of vaccine-associated autism or swathes of other poor health outcomes are not supported by evidence. Barring allergic reaction, which is less than 1 in a million chances, side effects (which could include fever, muscle soreness, rash, etc.) are inconvenient but temporary and self-resolving. Much as muscle soreness after a gym workout is inconvenient but leads to increased health.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak. Measles virus alone hospitalizes 1:100 children and kills 1:500 children. Amid measles, pertussis (whooping cough) is also rising. Please view this video as an example of what it does to small children who are unable to get vaccinated. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3oZrMGDMMw>

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Jake Kaminski, MD

Houston, TX

Tracey Torres

Corpus Christi ISD

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

I am AGAINST this Bill

JoAnne Settles, Dr.

Victoria College Nursing Program - Victoria, TX

Victoria, TX

Exceptions should be LIMITED, not expanded. The concept of herd immunity is void if there is not a large group of vaccinated individuals. The fact that we have such a severe outbreak of measles highlights this problem. It borders on criminal in my mind to have 2 deaths from a preventable disease. Please do not pass this bill.

Miriah Sachs

Self

Houston, TX

Please pass HB 1586 positively out of committee. Let us save the state more than \$600k per year by allowing parents to print exemption forms from home. There is no need to continue this antiquated process.

Christine Gannon  
Self  
Missouri City, TX

I oppose this bill. Making vaccine exemption forms easy to download without any information about the risks associated with that exemption, children and their peers are at an increased risk of danger for contracting preventable diseases or spreading diseases to those that legitimately cannot have immunizations.

Erin Chaffe, Dr.  
CommuniCare Health Centers  
Kyle, TX

My name is Dr. Erin Chaffe, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain. As a pediatrician serving Hays county, I am concerned that this legislation would not only lead to more completely preventable outbreaks, but leave our most vulnerable children like those undergoing chemotherapy in great danger.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems. It also leads to unnecessary and undue burdens on our healthcare systems, as hospitalizations will increase leading to greater healthcare costs. This bill will also unnecessarily harm our economy with lost work hours, as parents must stay home from work to care for sick children.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Erin Chaffe, Director of Pediatrics for CommuniCare Health Centers

Pamela White  
Self- School Nurse  
Waco, TX

OPPOSE!!! This bill will allow people to decline vaccinations merely for convenience without any thought to the repercussions down the road. If a parent chooses to not vaccinate their child it should be a well thought out and informed decision.

Mary Rebecca Dick  
Self - Project Manager  
Houston, TX

My name is Mary Rebecca Dick, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Mary Rebecca Dick

Houston, TX

Susan Edwards, RN  
Royse City ISD  
Royse City, TX

oppose. While this seems like a 'convenient' option, it is detrimental to our efforts to keep students safe and healthy and dangerous for public health. If a bad actor at a school pressures parents to fill out this form so they can quickly approve a child's enrollment without a vaccine record, the parent would have no reason to produce their child's accurate vaccine record in a timely manner. This would hinder our ability to accurately identify vaccine coverage. Further, it would disincentivize parents from getting the necessary vaccines to keep their child up-to-date, leading to lower rates of vaccine coverage necessary to prevent costly and dangerous outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illnesses.

Janey Sibson  
Self, Concerned Texas  
San Antonio, TX

Currently in the state of Texas, obtaining vaccine non-medical exemptions is very EASY and QUICK, with just a few clicks and filling out demographic information, it will take NO more than 5 minutes online. Once that's completed the form is received in 2 weeks. I am writing in STRONG opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines EVEN EASIER to obtain. High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas CURRENTLY. Vaccines are a victim of their own success, we don't need to continue studying vaccines; look around we don't see polio, diphtheria, tetanus etc,,,due to vaccines!! (Where is smallpox & why?) IF this process is made any easier, WE unfortunately, will begin to see MORE children DIE...this is preventable. Vaccine HISTORY speaks for itself. This will be a HARD/PAINFUL lesson to learn if we don't take action NOW. I recommend looking BACK at the death rates due to these diseases prior to the introduction of immunizations.

Becci Hannigan

self

Houston, TX

## An Open Letter to the Texas Legislature Regarding House Bill 1586: Implications for Public Health Reporting and Disease Prevention in Texas

As a Master's-prepared Chief Nurse overseeing a large urban clinical immunization program, I write to express deep concern over House Bill 1586, which seeks to restrict public health data collection, reporting, or access related to immunizations and infectious disease surveillance without explicit individual consent.

This bill would severely hinder Texas' ability to monitor, prevent, and respond to communicable diseases, undermining decades of work in evidence-based public health practice.

### Public Health Surveillance Saves Lives

Modern disease surveillance systems, including immunization registries like ImmTrac2, are crucial tools for detecting outbreaks, identifying coverage gaps, and deploying resources efficiently. Without timely, complete, and accessible data:

- Preventable disease outbreaks could go undetected until they spiral out of control.
- Immunization efforts could be fragmented, duplicative, or inefficient.
- Vulnerable populations—such as immunocompromised individuals, infants, and the elderly—could be left exposed.

Public health relies on aggregate, de-identified data to inform decisions—not to infringe on privacy but to protect the health of our communities.

### HB 1586 Undermines Disease Prevention and Trust

If passed, HB 1586 would:

- Weaken local and state ability to respond to outbreaks by limiting access to immunization and health status data.
- Create unnecessary administrative burdens that divert staff from direct care and prevention.
- Compromise routine vaccine delivery by undermining ImmTrac2, which helps providers identify patients due for immunizations.

Fuel mistrust by legitimizing misinformation around vaccine safety, public health tracking, and governmental overreach—when in fact, Texas already has strong privacy protections in place.

By conflating public health surveillance with individual surveillance, HB 1586 misrepresents the nature and intent of these essential systems.

### A Proven Record of Privacy and Security

Texas' immunization registry and disease surveillance systems are built on layers of safeguards, including:

- Encryption, secure access, and role-based permissions.
- Legislative limits on data sharing and use.
- Voluntary enrollment options for adult records.

There is no documented misuse of ImmTrac2 or comparable systems. The current model balances public health needs with personal autonomy—a balance HB 1586 threatens to disrupt.

### Call to Action

I urge you to oppose HB 1586 and:

- Reinforce Texas' commitment to science-based health policy.
- Strengthen, rather than restrict, tools that help detect, prevent, and respond to outbreaks.
- Educate the public about how immunization records and disease data are used—transparently, ethically, and securely—to protect every Texan.

### Conclusion

As a public health professional dedicated to protecting lives, I ask you to reject HB

Madeleine Flanagan

Self- Program Manager

Austin, TX

This is a foundation element to public health and protecting the health of our communities. Vaccine requirement keep our children safe and communities healthy.

Brittney Ribeiro, RN

Self School nurse

longview, TX

Oppose. Exemption for reason of conscience should not be accepted to not vaccinate for school. Medical exemption should be the only acceptable exemption to enroll in schools. We are seeing the effects of allowing these forms in West Texas and now in other states.

Cristy Runyan

Self/School Nurse

Coppell, TX

I oppose this bill. I think it might be OK to offer a downloadable form one-time per person, first-time only or on a very limited basis. I don't think however we should allow this for everyone, all the time. It is often times the child's enrollment that incentivizes the parent to get their immunizations. If we make it this easy to put off immunizations it could prove to be detrimental to public health. I think a better idea is to keep the forms as is but to allow school nurses grant a provisional enrollment if the parent shows proof that they are in the process of obtaining the form, like confirmation that their application was received and then keeps us updated on the status of the form. Thank you for all you do!

Stephanie Santo, RN

Self- School Nurse

Conroe, TX

Allowing an easier method for obtaining exemptions from vaccination requirements undermines public health, puts vulnerable populations at risk, and threatens the effectiveness of herd immunity. Vaccines are not just personal health decisions—they are a critical component of community protection. When too many people opt out of vaccination for non-medical reasons, it increases the risk of outbreaks of preventable diseases like measles, whooping cough, and polio. Making it easier to obtain an exemption to potentially lead to more people opting out or "bad actors" at schools/daycares encouraging parents to opt out rather than provide vaccine records or get their child up to date on vaccines.

Herd immunity relies on a high percentage of the population being immunized to prevent disease spread, especially to those who cannot be vaccinated for legitimate medical reasons, such as individuals with cancer, immune disorders, or severe allergies. Making exemptions too accessible, especially for philosophical or loosely defined religious reasons, erodes this protection.

Data from multiple outbreaks show a clear link between low vaccination rates and increased disease outbreaks (including the current outbreak in Texas). For example, communities with high rates of non-medical exemptions have experienced repeated and preventable outbreaks of measles. These diseases not only cause unnecessary suffering and death but also impose a significant burden on healthcare systems and public resources.

Moreover, the risk associated with modern vaccines is extremely low compared to the diseases they prevent. Scientific consensus overwhelmingly supports the safety and efficacy of vaccines. Allowing easy exemptions sends the wrong message, suggesting that personal belief can override evidence-based public health policy.

In conclusion, while respecting individual rights is important, those rights must be balanced against the rights of others to live in a safe and healthy community. Vaccine exemptions should be limited strictly to medically necessary cases, and the process of obtaining a non-medical exemption kept the same as it is currently. The current process also allows the department of health track numbers of exemptions, so that during a potential outbreak it would make notification and tracking much easier.

Brittney Ribeiro, RN

Self School nurse

longview, TX

Oppose



Carla Patschke  
Roosevelt Independent School  
Lubbock, TX

I do not want this bill because it will lead to more exemptions and kids will not be safe in schools.

Racheal Thumann, LVN  
self/ School Nurse  
Nacogdoches, TX

During a time where we are seeing once eradicated illness making a comeback , we do not need to make it easier for parents to get an exemption. being able to just print an exemption without a valid reason is asking for more illnesses to make a comeback. While we are battling measles with so many unvaccinated children, can you imagine polio , pertussis making a huge impact. We need to promote vaccination and make it harder to be exempt to protect our children and our schools. As a school nurse and a grandmother of an immune deficient child, my grandson is put at risk bc we are making it too easy for people to say no. He has all of his vaccines and yet we do all the correct things to have someone else put him at risk. I am not ok with that. Please say NO to making exemptions easier!!!

Kim Bollinger, RN  
self  
Sealy, TX  
SUPPORT

Kelly Hataway  
Self, Nurse  
Aubrey, TX  
OPPOSE

Lisa Duplantis  
Self/Nurse  
Richmond, TX  
SUPPORT

Mary Anna Hudnall  
self- nurse  
Tyler, TX  
Oppose

Tiffany Hrabal, Mrs  
Self- School Nurse  
Abbott, TX  
Oppose

Kimberly Hansen  
Self - School Nurse  
Georgetown, TX  
Oppose

Rebecca Rods

Self

Arlington, TX

I am writing in support of bill HB1586 and asking that you vote Yes on this bill moving it favorably out of committee.

Elizabeth Hoesley

Self; pilates teacher

Austin, TX

As a mother, I do everything I can to protect my daughter and keep her safe. She always wears her seatbelt, wears a helmet when she rides, she checks for cars before crossing the street, when she is sick I take her to the doctor. I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to house bill 1586, which would make vaccination exemptions easier to obtain. This bill will not provide freedom; this bill will cause unnecessary sickness, heartache and death.

Our Creator endowed us with the intelligence to develop vaccines for a reason. Let's use our incredible capabilities to keep children **SAFE**, not to take regressive notions that will endanger thousands of children.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases. High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hoesley

Paula Waggoner, Mrs

Self/My Family

Austin, TX

My name is Paula Waggoner and I am a wife and mother.

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Multiple news outlets are reporting hundreds of cases of measles and there was another death of an unvaccinated person.

I also refer to the Apr 6th report from USA Today - In a lengthy post on X Sunday, Kennedy said that he visited Gaines County in West Texas to console the families whose young children have died, later confirming that "the 642 confirmed cases of measles across 22 states, 499 of those in Texas."

"The most effective way to prevent the spread of measles is the MMR vaccine," Kennedy said, adding that he spoke to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and redeployed CDC teams to the state after Abbott's request.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Paula Waggoner

NAME

My name is [NAME], and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Patricia Cummings

Self

Lorena, TX

I support this bill.

Renee Poche-Davis

Renee Poche-Davis

Richmond, TX

I support this bill.

Helene Sheena

self /pediatrician

Bellaire, TX

My name is Helene S and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems. We are seeing the effect of this with the current measles outbreak where over 620 cases have been confirmed since January and 64 have been hospitalized. The two children that died were not vaccinated. Measles is a vaccine preventable illness. We should not be seeing this outbreak which occurred due to vaccine exemptions.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Helene S.

Harris County, Texas

Sheila Hemphill  
Texas Right To Know  
Brady, TX

PIERRE KORY, MD, MPA  
APR 11, 2025

I want to start by thanking Children's Health Defense, who, by their relationships with the families and members of the Mennonite community in Texas where the two young girls died, both obtained the medical records and then asked me to serve as an expert reviewer.

Both of the girls died in an ICU of end-stage lung failure. As a pulmonary and critical care specialist who has researched and managed lung failure for my entire career, I believe I am highly qualified to serve as the expert reviewer for these cases. At the beginning of any expert report for a malpractice case, the first pages are a lengthy recitation of the reviewer's credentials to make the case that they are qualified to serve as an "expert." Their CV is also attached as an Exhibit. I will spare you that part in this post, but I have made them available here if you are interested (Exhibit A).

When I was drafting this expert summary report of my detailed review of the medical records of these now-dead children, I tried to aim for a sober, objective, unemotional, and professional approach to be read (and likely heavily "critiqued") by some of the wider public. I believe I largely achieved that, with some exceptions. However, I added extensive "rolling" commentary for the layperson because this is Substack and not a report meant for a court case.

Before I start, I want all to know that the parents of both children are from the same community and know each other. They and the community are obviously in grief over these unnecessary and easily preventable deaths, which you will learn more about why below. I will state at the outset that, in my professional opinion, neither child died of measles. Not even close.

CASE #1 - Kaley Fehr, Age 6

I will only briefly discuss Kaley's case because it was already covered extensively in an interview I did with CHD TV a little over two weeks ago. Plus, the record and findings are straightforward.

Kaley was a six-year-old previously healthy girl who contracted measles along with her four siblings (all of whom weathered the illness just fine under the care of Dr. Ben Edwards). As her rash was clearing, she began to develop signs and symptoms of "secondary bacterial pneumonia," a not uncommon complication of almost any viral infection. To wit, one of my three daughters fell ill with the same after she contracted influenza at age 14; however, in her case, she recovered from it two days after receiving an appropriate antibiotic.

In Kaley's case, her worsening respiratory status led her parents to bring her to Providence Covenant Children's Hospital. Please read the rest of the report here.

[https://pierrekorymedicalmusings.com/p/my-expert-review-of-the-medical-records?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR7ORznGgq7HrdsJpU1Vg0MAfri1Q5Nyj4oV928SwRZ155uVKG-yfxBkJUX0UQ\\_aem\\_-\\_KicF1bSgk-mahamXon7g&triedRedirect=true](https://pierrekorymedicalmusings.com/p/my-expert-review-of-the-medical-records?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR7ORznGgq7HrdsJpU1Vg0MAfri1Q5Nyj4oV928SwRZ155uVKG-yfxBkJUX0UQ_aem_-_KicF1bSgk-mahamXon7g&triedRedirect=true)

Yolanda Vasquez-Foster  
Self  
Fulshear, TX

I oppose this bill. We are already creating dangerous practices for vaccine-preventable diseases to spread. Herd immunity is needed to protect all children.

Dawn Richardson

National Vaccine Information Center & Self

Austin, TX

NVIC SUPPORTS HB 1586 because it expands access to vaccine exemptions for children and families by streamlining the process and making it quicker and less burdensome to exercise an individual's statutory right to a reasons of conscience and religious vaccine exemption.

The health department already abused their rulemaking authority by putting a two-year expiration date on exemption forms. This expiration is not in statute whatsoever – it is an unlegislated hurdle put in place by the department to make it harder for parents to exercise their right under the law to exempt their child from vaccine mandates. That is inappropriate behavior by the health department.

This expiration on exemption forms should not be allowed. It is burdensome and unnecessary for families to have to repeat their request to renew their exemption. This causes kids to miss school when the health department takes weeks sometimes to mail out these forms or they get lost in the mail. If the health department is going to arbitrarily expire forms by rule, the least the state can do is make them available online so kids don't miss school.

This bill also prevents the Department of State Health Services from tracking and maintaining a record of the individuals' names who have downloaded or requested an exemption form that could be used to identify or target individuals who refuse to take one or more required vaccines for school attendance. NVIC supports the individual's right to informed consent, which includes the right to refuse a vaccine without coercion, harassment, or penalty. All vaccines are pharmaceutical products that carry a risk of injury and even death.

Fatima Frausto

Self

San Antonio, TX

I urge the committee to vote NO on HB 1586. Not only would this bill put immunocompromised children at risk, it would risk the health of all Texans. The process as it stands is NOT wasting taxpayer money; it also ensures that all parents are following the law.

Tonya Alexander

Self

Princeton, TX

Exemptions and immunizations should not be required for school enrollment

Joyce White

Self/homemaker

Houston, TX

Please support this bill. It saves tax pay dollars and streamlines the exemption process.

Laura Marshall

Self

San Antonio, TX

I oppose this bill. Allowing vaccine exemption forms for download without further information may seem convenient but it can be detrimental to keeping school children safe and healthy and is dangerous for public health. If a parent is pressured to fill out this form so they can quickly approve a child's enrollment without a vaccine record, the parent would have no reason to produce the accurate vaccine record for their child in a timely manner. This hinders the school's ability to identify vaccine coverage. Further, it disincentivizes parents from getting the necessary vaccines to keep their child(ren) up-to-date. This would lead to lower rates of vaccine coverage that could result in COSTLY and DANGEROUS outbreaks of preventable diseases.

Amanda Bohm

Self

Austin, TX

No one should be forced to take a medicine of any kind. There should be freedom of conscience on matters of vaccine, particularly now that RFK Jr is showing that they are causing autism and other severe issues. Big Pharma makes billions by getting vaccines placed on mandatory schedules. Don't give into their big profit schemes. One day you could be held liable for being a part of this scheme and damaging student's health. Let the parent decide.

Ginger Moore

Myself

San Angelo, TX

Childhood Vaccinations have not been tested individually nor intermixed together to be required by law to enter schools! Make it optional!

Dr Arathi Shah

Self

Austin, TX

I'm Dr Arathi Shah, a pediatrician of 17 years and I stand in respectful strong opposition to this bill. We don't want any more preventable infectious diseases to harm our children and community. These are fatal, but are entirely preventable with application of the best scientific gift of the century- immunizations. Please don't let barriers to immunizations make it easy to drop off. Last thing we need are more barriers to our children being safe and healthy. Please help our communities thrive well with health and economically. Less sick children, less missed days of school and parents from work; less hospitalizations and no mortality.

Deborah Countie, Dr

Self

Audtin, TX

I oppose this bill. It would be a bad precedent that would lead to more measles outbreaks and more fatalities to preventable diseases such as measles and pertussis. We have public health to protect ext the public from preventable diseases that have no curable treatments.

Cole Glosser

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

Austin, TX

My name is Cole Glosser, and I'm a policy fellow with the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, an organization advocating for Texans with Disabilities to live and learn safely in the community of their choice, and we are strongly opposed to HB 1586. Childhood vaccinations for school enrollment have acted as an incredibly important in building up herd immunity within school settings, but also in protecting the health of children who are unable to receive vaccinations due to a variety of medical reasons, such as being immunocompromised, or being allergic to vaccine ingredients. When every child that is able to receive a vaccination does, it allows those unvaccinated due to health reasons to remain safe in school settings. HB 1586 is highly concerning in that it looks to relax exemption affidavit and reporting requirements during a time where measles cases are on the rise in our state, and with unvaccinated rates going up within our school systems, it puts children unable to be vaccinated in a very precarious situation, with the potential to make attending school in person, potentially detrimental to their health. Therefore, we oppose HB 1586.

Erika Lenk-Hatfield, Mrs

Self

Rockwall, TX

As a Texas parent, I am writing in strong support of HB 1586. Families like mine deserve to make important health decisions for our children without being subjected to unnecessary tracking, delays, or invasion of privacy. Currently, requesting an exemption affidavit feels like being treated with suspicion simply for exercising our legal rights. HB 1586 respects parents by allowing us to quickly access the exemption form online without disclosing personal information, which protects our family's privacy and dignity.

By also prohibiting the Department of State Health Services from keeping records of who requests these forms, HB 1586 restores much-needed trust between parents and public institutions. I believe the government's role should be to serve families, not monitor them. I respectfully urge the legislature to pass HB 1586 to ensure Texas continues to stand for freedom, parental rights, and personal choice.

Susana Carranza, Dr.

self, retired engineer

Austin, TX

I am Dr. Susana Carranza, representing myself, and I oppose HB 1586.

We are in the middle of a measles outbreak, the largest in Texas in the last 30 years. As of April 25, we have recorded 646 cases, 2 fatalities, 64 hospitalizations and now spread in 26 counties (Texas Tribune article: <https://www.texastribune.org/series/texas-measles-outbreak/>).

The outbreak started in Gaines County, which has a vaccination rate of 82%. According to the CDC, vaccination rates need to stay above 95% to ensure herd immunity (<https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/whats-new/measles-outbreak-risk-in-us.html#:~:text=What%20CDC%20knows,risk%20for%20a%20measles%20outbreak.>)

Why on earth would you be proposing or supporting a bill that will likely lower the overall vaccination rate for school age kids at a time when we see the consequences of low vaccination rates?

I have heard many times that the success of vaccines is its downfall. People forget the terrible outcomes of many diseases because high vaccination rates virtually eradicated them. But it does not take much for these diseases to spring back to life, as we have seen here in Texas. There is a tiny number of people who really cannot be vaccinated and they are placed in grave danger when too many people who could be vaccinated simply opt out.

What is the point of having advanced science which gives us life saving vaccines if we are foolish enough to ignore scientific guidelines?

I urge this committee to protect the health of all Texans and stop this dangerous bill.

Tom Glass

Texas Constitutional Enforcement

McDade, TX

Texas Constitutional Enforcement and I support HB 1586. This bill is also a Legislative Priority of the Republican Party of Texas.



Brittany Richardson-Canty

Self, Pediatrician

Katy, TX

My name is Brittany Richardson-Canty, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Brittany Richardson-Canty

Katy, TX

Ashley Armstead

Self

Dallas, TX

I urge a yes vote on HB1586 on behalf of my family. People move their families for all kinds of reasons. Medical freedom in Texas is among mine and I desire a future for my children where they don't have to make a decision between pursuing the career path of their choice, and facing the known risks and costs to their health associated with vaccines. Now is the time to make Texas the beacon of medical freedom

Kaitlin Matthews, Ms

self

Sugar Land, TX

allowing students who are not vaccinated to participate in an environment with vaccinated children puts the other children at risk. If people refuse to participate in public health measures they do not deserve to have the benefit the rest of the members of society enjoy. vaccines protect children and those who do not protect children are morally in the wrong.

Jessica Walsh

Self

Houston, TX

Given the current measles outbreak in our state, I am concerned about anything which would make it easier to get school exemptions. As evidenced by the outbreak, it is already easy enough to exempt children from the school-required vaccines.

Katherine Wells, Dr.  
Self - Public Health Professional  
Lubbock, TX

I am a public health professional familiar with the ongoing measles outbreak in West Texas. I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1586, which proposes to simplify the process for obtaining vaccine exemptions.

On the surface, the idea of reducing administrative burden for both the Department of State Health Services and parents requesting exemptions may seem reasonable. However, I am deeply concerned about the unintended consequences. Making the exemption process easier risks significantly increasing exemption rates — not necessarily among those with deep convictions not to vaccinate, but among parents who find it easier to file an exemption than to take the time to schedule a doctor's appointment, take time off work, and ensure their child is vaccinated.

We must have guardrails in place to ensure that obtaining an exemption is not easier than completing the vaccination process itself.

Vaccination rates are declining — not just in the communities where I reside, but across Texas. In the current outbreak, we have seen infants, too young to be vaccinated, contract measles after being exposed in daycare centers by children whose parents chose not to vaccinate. Those families endured serious illness, missed work, and faced the emotional toll of watching their young children suffer — all from a disease that was declared eliminated from the United States more than 20 years ago.

Making it easier to obtain vaccine exemptions will only result in more preventable illnesses, more outbreaks, and more unnecessary suffering. That is not fair to the families who do their part to protect public health, nor is it fair to the children who rely on us to keep their environments safe.

I respectfully urge you to oppose House Bill 1586.

Ashley Smith-Kock  
Self, School Nurse (RN)  
Rosharon, TX

Strongly oppose

Cindy Geisman  
Self  
Bastrop, TX

I oppose this bill.

Laurie Stiteler  
Self  
San Antonio, TX

Please no exemptions from immunizations! Vaccines are an easy and effective way to prevent pandemics which kill so many.

Susan Baker  
myself  
Cypress, TX

I am Susan P. Baker, a mother of two and a grandmother of 8. I am opposed to HB1586 because it will allow those who have a "pro-control" agenda to use the word "freedom" to take control of the health of our kids using any old excuse to not have a child vaccinated. We already have a method for parents to get a medical exception for their child, which we know is not always given in good faith, and that method is wreaking havoc in the Texas population of children with the measles epidemic. Communicable diseases can cause consequences that will stay with people for life. We know death can also be in the cards for kids as evidenced by the deaths of some children already in Texas from measles. Please don't let a few people jeopardize the health of all Texas children, heck, the people of Texas! Thank you for what you do. I appreciate you.

Karen Santhanam

Self

Cedar Park, TX

I oppose HB 1586. Why are we opting to weaken vaccination rules in the middle of a deadly Measles outbreak. This proves that we need more vaccination requirements, not less. Protect our kids and the people of Texas. Vote NO on HB 1586.

BILL KING

self - retired judge

Austin, TX

When I was a child, vaccinations were administered at the high school auditorium, the de facto community center for my small town. Whenever a new vaccine was developed and made available, my parents and all the parents in town lined up so their children could get life-saving and health-saving medicine. The parents did this because many of them knew people growing up who had died of or been injured by diseases that were now preventable with the vaccine. Why would you want to go backwards?

You are the PUBLIC Health committee. Your job is to protect the PUBLIC'S health. There is no single method to increase public health that is more effective than vaccinations. And protecting children should be at the top of your list. If a parent wants to refuse proven medical interventions for his child, fine. But he can not allow his child to contaminate the public space where all the other children should be kept safe - the public schools. His "parental freedom" does not override the "parental freedom" of all the other parents, who, by the way, pay taxes for that public school.

There are now hundreds of measles cases in Texas and some deaths. Quite frankly, it is absurd to go against decades of medical research. No individual should be allowed to threaten the PUBLIC'S health because of their personal beliefs

Michelle Rowton

Self

Melissa, TX

We should be able to print forms from the internet. You are accomplishing nothing other than money, staff, printing fees, mailing fees, etc with the current practice. You aren't chanting anyone's mind by requiring an ordering hoop to jump. You are wasting money.

Peggy Fisher Price

Self

Houston, TX

I am Peggy Fisher Price, an always voter from Houston. I strongly oppose Hull's HB 1586. This bill would do harm to our state. Vaccine programs / vaccine requirements are what eradicated serious diseases in our modern world. My father had polio in 1952 before the vaccine was available. He was saved by iron lung technology. He never walked again, never had full use of his limbs. Then the vaccine and requirements for it eradicated polio. When all school-age children - except those few that CANNOT be vaxxed — are vaccinated, we protect everyone. Do not pass this bill that would go backwards.

Justin Henderson

Self, medical student and parent

Houston, TX

My name is Justin Henderson, and I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

High exemption rates mean low vaccination rates which can lead to disease outbreaks. We are seeing this play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Justin Henderson

Chris Donofrio

Self

The Woodlands, TX

I OPPOSE HB 1586.

The current law is adequate, and does not require a person to have internet access. Also, in order to “understands the benefits and risks of immunizations and the benefits and risks of not being immunized,” (p1, L20-22) having to send a written request will allow time for reflection.

Please, kill HB 1586 in your Committee.

Respectfully, Chris J Donofrio

Karen Macias, Mrs

Self

Cibolo, TX

I support HB 1586 - Medical Freedom - Exemption from required immunization for school enrollment!

Lucy Trainor, mrs

self

driftwood, TX

I support HB 1586. This bill makes the exemption process much more user friendly for parents. Thank you Rep. Hull!

Gaylyn DeVine

Self/Business Owner, SREC SD11

Pearland, TX

In Favor of medical freedom! and vaccine exemptions!

Jennifer Easley  
Texas PTA  
San Antonio, TX

Texas PTA respectfully submits the following comments in opposition to HB 1586, which proposes to make conscientious exemption affidavit forms for school immunizations directly downloadable from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) website.

Texas PTA is aligned with National PTA's position on vaccines, which encourages State Education Agencies to require certification of immunizations to prevent communicable diseases as a condition of entry into public and nonpublic schools, preschools, and child care facilities. National PTA recognizes the need for limited exemptions for medical and religious reasons, but also emphasizes the importance of maintaining high vaccination rates to protect all children.

This bill would significantly weaken the current conscientious exemption process by removing the requirement to request the affidavit from DSHS and eliminating form security features. Making these forms more accessible could lead to their use out of convenience rather than genuine personal conviction.

Such a shift may discourage families from completing age-appropriate immunizations, which are often tied to well-child visits. Once an exemption is submitted, many do not revisit the vaccination schedule—reducing overall vaccine coverage in schools.

These changes come at a time when measles cases are on the rise in Texas, largely among unvaccinated individuals. Many children cannot receive vaccines for medical reasons and depend on herd immunity to stay safe. Loosening exemption procedures would further jeopardize the health and safety of vulnerable students.

Texas PTA believes in the importance of both parental rights and public health. HB 1586 risks upsetting that balance by making it easier to opt out of protections meant to benefit the broader school community. For these reasons, we respectfully oppose HB 1586.

Thank you to the Public Health Committee for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Leigh Anne Rayburn

self - teacher

Houston, TX

Does anyone in this legislation remember polio, and how hard Americans worked to eradicate it? My father couldn't walk from ages 10-12 because of it and his parents felt certain they would lose him. That isn't that long ago. The March of Dimes literally involved American children mailing dimes to the White House to find a vaccine for it. I had chicken pox and mumps in the late 1970s and am glad my students do not have to worry about either. Please, let's quash this spread of measles by keeping disinformation at bay. If we ease up on vaccination requirements for schools, then I, as an immunocompromised teacher with 25 years of experience, am terrified of what will happen. We cannot go backward. Listen to the science.

Jane Leeves, Dr.

self, retired physician

Houston, TX

I oppose making it easier for parents to opt out of their children being immunized. Measles is a debilitating and sometimes fatal illness that often weakens the immune system for 2-3 years after one has it which further exposes one to further suffering and death. It is highly contagious--90% of people exposed develop measles. While the exact mechanisms that cause autism are not known, scientific evidence does not support the idea that it is caused by vaccines. Making it easier for parents to opt out will increase the risk of getting measles for everyone and we will lose herd immunity and people will die, in particular young children and those who are already immunosuppressed such as people undergoing treatment for cancer and those with organ transplants and HIV/AIDS.

Erin Osborn, Mrs.

Self; sales representative

Richmond, TX

Please OPPOSE bill 1586. Parents can already opt their children out of immunizations, we do not need to make it easier for parents to do this. The more children who are not vaccinated, the more disease outbreaks we will have- just like we are seeing in the West TX measles outbreak. The outbreak is not a coincidence. This is the type of outbreak that is completely preventable if immunization rates remain high, but sadly, immunization rates have fallen in this community and look what devastation has followed. (Including two innocent children who have died!) I am asking you to oppose this house bill and protect our communities by keeping immunization rates high!

Cherise Rohr-Allegrini

self

San Antonio, TX

As we have seen in the current measles outbreak, when there is one person infected surrounded by others who are not vaccinated, the virus spreads, deadly outbreaks occur. Immunization rates have decreased in Texas causing more frequent outbreaks. We have seen that since the change in law in 2001, the number of parents choosing not to vaccinate their children has skyrocketed to dangerous levels. It is already extremely easy to exempt out of vaccines to attend school. Making it even easier will create more illness, and unfortunately, more deaths and long term complications.

Jerry Baethge, Dr. (Dentist)

Self employed Dentist

Richmond, TX

I am opposed to this bill making it easier to allow parents to opt out of school required vaccines. Vaccines provide wide protections for all children in school, and have been very helpful in preventing disease outbreaks in our communities. Our vaccine programs have helped to minimize the resurgence of many childhood diseases and I desire a safe learning environment for all children, including my grandchildren and my nieces who teach in the Houston area. Please oppose this bill and protect the futures of our children. Thank you for allowing me to voice my opposition.

Fellow Texan

Jerry Baethge DDS

Sandra Kenny

Kenny, Sandra

Richmond, TX

This bill will make it much easier for anyone to get an exemption for their child from getting the required school vaccinations. I believe the current affidavits already allow parents to get their children exempt from the vaccinations for certain reasons, we don't need it to be any easier. Unvaccinated children have recently caused an outbreak of measles, and two children have died. I don't want my great grandchildren to be among the sick. They are all vaccinated, but vaccinations aren't 100% effective. Vaccinations for many of the diseases were not available when my children were little. I almost lost my daughter to chicken pox due to a secondary complication. She also had the measles. No mother should have to see her child so ill. Vaccines work and most children should be vaccinated so others won't get the disease. Please do not make it easier for parents to opt out of vaccines. Vote NO on HB 1586!

Sheri Cobarruvias, Dr.

Self

Schertz, TX

Please oppose this bill! Children need vaccinations to prevent diseases that may unnecessarily cause death. There are some children who are immune compromised that can be negatively affected by these preventable infections if only the children be vaccinated. Please oppose this bill. Thank you!

Linda Phenix

self-employed grant writer

Houston, TX

I OPPOSE HB1586 which will make it easier for parent to opt their kids out of school required vaccines. The more kids who are not vaccinated the more disease outbreaks we will have- like what we are seeing with the large measles outbreak in our state. This is not about parental rights. Parents already can easily opt out their kids. Vaccine preventable diseases can be deadly as we have seen with the explosion of Measles cases. I am from the generation where my parents were thrilled when the polio vaccine was available. They of course knew people who had polio. And as a child I had the mumps, measles and chickenpox at the same time. I almost didn't make it. To this day I can remember being so sick and that my parents were crying. They thought I was going to die. The people supporting this bill already have the freedom to not vaccinate their kids. What about other parents who want their children protected from vaccine preventable diseases? Don't they count? Don't their children count? The science is clear and has been clear for decades. There is no reason on God's green earth to pass this legislation.

Laura Mayo, Rev.

self Minister

HOUSTON, TX

More than 600 people- mainly children have been infected and two children have died. Public safety means that we all must vaccinate our children. Attending public school should mean being vaccinated.

Deisy Moncada

Teachers

Houston, TX

As a history teacher, I do not want to teach about more pandemics that are preventable. Not only that, we must protect the teachers that are pregnant and/or immunocompromised. We are around children everyday, all day. We also need a safety net to protect our health.

Katelyn Czarnecki

Self

Houston, TX

As a public-school employee and a public-school parent, I would not like for vaccination requirements to decrease. If anything, they should become stricter to protect the public health of our students and staff. We deserve to be protected.

Jeanne Fruge-Rodriguez, Dr

Self, Homemaker

Houston, TX

Parents already have the right to make decisions about vaccines for their children in the state of Texas and can "opt out" for school enrollment. HB1586 is not a necessary piece of legislation. Parental rights are not at risk. In addition to being unnecessary, the passing of HB 1586 will result in a potential health hazard for children attending schools, their families, neighbors, and communities. The more children who are not vaccinated leads to a higher rate of disease outbreaks. The evidence to support this can be clearly seen in the large measles outbreak Texas is suffering from currently. I ask you, as my state representatives, to listen to your constituency and vote "no" for HB 1586.

Judy Le

Self

Houston, TX

I STRONGLY OPPOSE to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm.

I believe in science and vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent the spread of dangerous and sometimes deadly diseases.

If this bill passes, we are already seeing the effects play out in Texas as we face a deadly measles outbreak.

Allowing more non-medical exemptions endangers students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, including children with cancer or compromised immune systems.

I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children.

Sincerely,

Judy Le

Houston, TX



Diana Baethge, Mrs  
self retired teacher  
Richmond, TX

I am writing to urge you to oppose HB 1586. Making it easier to opt out of vaccines infringes on the rights of others to not be exposed to contagious diseases and hurts children. The more kids who are not vaccinated the more disease outbreaks we will have - like the current measles outbreak in our state. 600 people, mainly children, have been infected and 2 have died. I do not want to see children fall sick and possibly die. I do not want to see unvaccinated children expose the immune compromised people to disease. This is a very short sighted bill that is not keeping the greater good of society in mind. It is mind boggling that in these modern times some people are rejecting public health practices. It is ridiculous that in these modern times people want their children to become seriously ill. This bill is not about parental rights as parents can already opt their kids out. Please do not support this bill.

Holly Turner  
Self  
Austin, TX

Please oppose this bill. Changing the law would make it easier for parents to opt-out of getting their children vaccinated. That is not good for the overall well-being our state. If a bill like this passes, Texas will see disease outbreaks even more significant than what is currently occurring with measles. Parents currently have the opportunity to opt-out of having their children vaccinated. This bill is both unnecessary and harmful.

Nisha Worsham  
Self  
Cypress, TX

Given the current measles outbreak in our state, I am concerned about anything which would make it easier to get school exemptions. As evidenced by the outbreak, it is already easy enough to exempt children from the school-required vaccines.

Elizabeth Cortes  
self  
Houston, TX

As a teacher, immunization protect everyone in the school. We have preventable and safe vaccines in this country and we should not regress back in our trust in medicine.

Aimee Flores  
Self  
North Richland Hills, TX

This is unnecessary legislation. An option to opt out of vaccinations for school aged children wishing to enroll in schools already exists. In light of the current Measles outbreak, this legislation should be taken off the docket. Parental choice is not being infringed upon; however, more opt-outs on vaccinations based on mis-information and lack of education would create situations that are dangerous for public health, vulnerable populations, and healthcare workers. This bill should be tabled or removed from consideration.

Kirstin Matthews

Kirstin Matthews

SUGAR LAND, TX

My name is Kirstin Matthews and I am writing in strong OPPOSITION to HB 1586, which would make non-medical exemptions from school required vaccines easier to obtain.

Vaccines are an important part of providing and ensuring health Texans. It's vital that children who have no underlying medical conditions take state mandated immunizations prior to enrolling in public schools. This will make sure all students are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases, especially Measles. We are currently seeing a huge outbreak of Measles in Texas from unvaccinated children with more than 600 have been infected, more than 60 hospitalized and two died. This is two death that were preventable and risk serious side effects including deafness and blindness. This outbreak could spread throughout the state. It's already spread to 25 states in the US. Only those with immunity provided by vaccines will be safe. Other who are unable to receive vaccines or have lower immunity including those with medical conditions (or receiving cancer treatments), babies and the elderly will be left vulnerable.

This bill does not uphold freedom. It promotes unnecessary harm. Those who do not wish to vaccinate their children have alternatives private schooling options. They have the freedom to home school or find a private school that does not require vaccines.

Do not pass a bill which makes it easy to bypassing vaccines. Not only will it increase outbreaks for diseases that are preventable, it will increase deaths and also side effect that will permanently harm children's ability to be fully productive members of society. This will lead to increased healthcare costs and public health costs.

The vast majority of Texans obtain and support immunizations. Those who testify for the bill are the minority and often the same person coming over and over to the capitol to protest against lifesaving measure for selfish reasons. As Christians, it's our duty to protect others that cannot protect ourselves, not to promote self-centered policies that put others at risk because of inconveniences we experience.

Vote No for HB 1586. I urge members of the House Public Health Committee to oppose this bill. Please support policies that protect the health of our children and maintain the integrity of school immunization requirements.

Kirstin Matthews

Sugar Land, Texas