

Original: 2142

**21ST SENATORIAL DISTRICT  
MARY JO WHITE**

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**Senate of Pennsylvania**

October 10, 2000

Robert E. Nyce  
Executive Director  
Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrisstown 2  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Re: Proposed Rulemaking # 10-162 (School Health; Immunization Requirements)

Dear Mr. Nyce:

Please find enclosed several constituent letters I have received regarding the Department of Health's proposed regulation # 10-162. This regulation would require students to receive the Varicella vaccination prior to entering the seventh grade or provide a written statement from a parent or guardian stating that the child has already had the chickenpox disease (Amends 25 PaCode § 23.83).

Several constituents have expressed a concern regarding the safety of the Varicella vaccine, citing possible severe side effects from this and other mandated immunizations. Additionally, parents have expressed a concern regarding a program that immunizes a child against a natural childhood disease that often results in a stronger immune system for the child.

I urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission to carefully consider the issues raised in the enclosed letters prior to the final adoption of these regulations. Any mandated vaccination requirements should be based on sound science and designed to prevent contagious diseases without posing health risks to the student receiving the vaccination. These requirements must be balanced with a parent's right to make decisions regarding the health care of his or her child.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mary Jo White in cursive.

MARY JO WHITE  
SENATOR, 21<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT

MJW/ph

cc: The Honorable Hal Mowery, Chairman  
Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee

Enclosure

**COMMITTEES**

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES & ENERGY,  
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APPROPRIATIONS

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

RECEIVED  
2000 OCT 10 PM 3:50  
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION

Original: 2142

OCT 03 2000

Lara Kinney  
P.O. Box 106  
Mill Village, PA 16427

September 27, 2000

The Honorable Senator Mary Jo White  
c/o Senate Post Office, Main Capitol  
Room 168-MC  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Senator White,

I am writing to you as a parent living in your district that is strongly opposed to the Pennsylvania Department of Health's proposed rules implementing a mandate for the Varicella vaccines. This vaccine is currently available to any child in PA whose parents feel it is necessary; the issue at hand is that PDH's proposal will make it ILLEGAL if a parent exercises thier discretion to either delay or not administer these vaccines at all. These proposals blatantly disregard parental rights and the basic human right of informed consent for medical procedures.

My three children, as well as most, have all endured this virus naturally and I believe thier immunities are stronger beacuse of it. The more we try to control and defend against any inconvenient or uncomfortable illness, the weaker and more defenseless we make our bodies. Also, I'm concerned about the safety of this,as well as all other, vaccines. The manufacture and preservation of these vaccines require elements such as formaldehyde and aluminum. In the case of word epidemics where death of masses is the result of certain viruses, I can truly see the impact of vaccines, regardless of the ingredients. But, to mandate a medical procedure that is strictly a preventative for a normal, immune-building childhood illness, I feel is taking away yet another right of parents' choice in their child's welfare and health. How many vaccines will be enough? Consider not only what virus you are driving away, but what you are injecting into these small children in mass doses.


Parents know their children, raise thier children, feed them, take care of them when they are sick and should be granted the respect they deserve in decision making about the health care of their children without being legally forced. It will then be the parents and children who live with the consequences of any health problems arising as a consequence of receiving or not receiving this vaccine, not PHD.

Comments received by October 4, 2000 will become part of public record and will be considered by the PHD when deciding whether to accept or reject these rules. Letters may be sent by mail or fax to: Pennsylvania Department of Health

P.O. Box 90  
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lara A. Kinney

RECEIVED  
2000 OCT 10 PM 3:51  
SECRETARY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Original: 2142

418 West Main Street  
Evans City, PA 16033  
September 26, 2000

SEP 29 2000

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2000 OCT 10 PM 3:51

REVIEW COMMISSION

The Honorable Mary Jo White  
Room 168, Main Capitol Bldg.  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Senator White:

We are writing this letter to you as parents who are living in your district and who oppose the Pennsylvania Department of Health's proposed rules implementing a mandate for the Varicella Vaccines. This vaccine is currently available to any child in Pennsylvania whose parents want it administered; the issue here is that the Pennsylvania Department of Health's proposal will make it illegal if a parent wants to either delay one of these vaccines or not give it at all. These proposals blatantly disregard parental rights and the basic human right of informed consent to medical procedures.

Immunizations are a medical procedure that can cause serious reactions and even death for some. The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program has paid out over 1 billion dollars in damages to families for injuries and deaths caused by vaccines. There are thousands of other families who have reported adverse affects caused by vaccines and have been placed with the burden of proof of determining that vaccines have cause harm to their children. We are a family of the latter.

Our son had a serious reaction to the MMR vaccine. He is now left with autism and mental retardation. We have the difficult job of proving that it indeed was the vaccine that caused his condition. There is no doubt in our minds that the vaccine did cause this damage to our little boy; unfortunately, we are not doctors and cannot perform medical research on our own. We can only explain what our son was like prior to the vaccine and report the events that occurred afterward. Our family suffers every day because of the predicament we were placed in. We thought that we were protecting our son by allowing his doctor to vaccinate him. We wish now that more research had been done on vaccinations and that we were allowed an educated choice. We thought that we were protecting our son; whereas, we allowed someone else's values and choices to determine our son's life. We would like to extend an invitation to you to visit our home and meet our little boys. You will then be able to see first hand what damage can be caused by vaccines and parents who believed in their doctors and medical community. Please take advantage of this invitation and RSVP us at 724-538-5953 so that we can set up a time convenient for all.

There are many valid reasons why a parent may not want to use these vaccines. Parents are capable of making informed decisions about the health care of their children and must not be placed in a position in which exercising a conscientious objection to the administration of this vaccine means breaking the law. Leave this decision where it should be, in the hands of the parents. It will be the parents and children who live with the consequences of a health problem precipitated by this vaccine, not the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Sincerely,

*Davy & Mary Wildman*  
Davy and Mary Wildman

Original: 2142

**J. Clark and Margaret C. Echols**

September 29, 2000

Alice Gray  
Director, Immunization Div.  
PA Dept of Health  
Box 90  
Harrisburg, PA 17108

RECEIVED  
2000 OCT 10 PM 3:51  
AGENCY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

I am writing in response to your request for public comments regarding the proposed mandate for the Varicella vaccines. I request that this letter is made part of the public record.

It appears to me that the proposed mandate would make it illegal if a parent makes an educated decision to delay administering this vaccine, or even choose not to give it at all. This puts parents like us in an untenable position. We desire to be law abiding. At the same time, we believe this vaccine is unnecessary and potentially dangerous.

I urge the PA Dept of Health to withdraw these rules. We are perfectly capable of making decisions about the health of our children. Because this is a normal childhood disease, which ought to be allowed to run its course so as to give the child a lifelong immunity.

Please do not put us in the position of having to choose between doing what we believe is best for our children and obedience to the law.

Sincerely,

J. Clark Echols, Jr.

cc: Senator Harold Mowery  
Senator Mary Jo White  
Representative Guy Travaglio