

TIMOTHY F. MURPHY
STATE SENATOR
37TH DISTRICT

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October 30, 2000

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REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Honorable Robert S. Zimmerman, Jr.
Secretary, Pennsylvania Dept. of Health
Room 802, Health & Welfare Building
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Dear Secretary Zimmerman:

As proposed regulations #10-162, the Department of Health Immunization Requirements, move through the regulatory review process, I wanted to express some concerns with respect to protecting the health and safety of the public.

I have received letters from concerned citizens expressing their opposition to the state mandating a vaccine for a virus that they feel is not life threatening and could potentially expose their children to unnecessary risks.

After reviewing the Center for Disease Control's recommendations for the use of the Varicella Vaccine as well as its contraindications and precautions, I wanted to ascertain that sufficient public information and education would be provided by the Department to ensure the following susceptible students would be exempt from the Varicella vaccine:

- Those who have a history of anaphylactic reaction to any component of the vaccine, including gelatin and neomycin.
- Those who are afflicted with a severe illness or malignant condition, until they have recovered.
- Those with a family history of congenital or hereditary immunodeficiency in first degree relatives or who have AIDS or other clinical manifestations of HIV infection, cellular immunodeficiency, hypogammaglobulinemia and dysgammaglobulinemia.

Honorable Robert S. Zimmerman

Page 2

October 30, 2000

Also, parents of children receiving the vaccine should be provided with a cautionary notice warning them to avoid using salicylates (aspirin) for six weeks after vaccination because of the association of aspirin use and Reye's syndrome following Varicella.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TIMOTHY F. MURPHY
STATE SENATOR
37TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

TFM/tjz

CC: Robert E. Nyce, Executive Director
Independent Regulatory Review Commission