



May 14, 2015

Dear Honorable Governor Shumlin,

Under your guidance, Vermont has been the leader on so many fronts. However, you are about to be faced with an important decision. If you sign H98 into law, Vermont will be the first state in the nation to repeal a philosophical exemption, effectively saying to the families of Vermont: “You do not have the right to be fully informed and make medical decisions for your children, and you must now choose between vaccination and education.”

Mr. Governor, many Vermonters have been adversely impacted by vaccine side effects, but because there is no liability,¹ their injuries have been largely ignored. These are real-life, costly and tragic vaccine injuries^{2,3,4} and the people suffering from them are not going to go away. In fact, we are watching a health crisis unfold before our very eyes: chronic neurological and autoimmune diseases as well as vaccine-induced brain injuries are all on the rise.^{5,6} What is the State planning to do about it, aside from repealing our right to say no to vaccines?

Mr. Governor, the thousands of members of the Vermont Coalition for Vaccine Choice would like to respectfully request a statement of justification from your office as to why Health Commissioner Chen asserted to the Vermont House that it is necessary to do away with our 1979 philosophical vaccine exemption at this time.

It is our position that there is no compelling public health emergency that justifies the use of such extreme state power by your Health Commissioner. In fact, Dr. Chen’s recommendation to repeal comes at a time when vaccination rates are at an all time high.

¹ The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (NCVIA) of 1986 (42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa- 1 to 300aa-34)

² Vaccine reactions are widely regarded as temporal in relationship only (aka, coincidence) by administering physicians and public health officials. Since 2005, the deaths of five (5) Vermonters and over 600 other vaccine injuries/adverse reactions experienced by Vermonters have been reported to the Vaccine Adverse Reporting System (<http://vaers.hhs.gov/index>).

³ Eighty (80) adverse events were reported to VAERS from Jan.1, 2014 -Mar. 14, 2015 in Vermont http://medalerts.org/vaersdb/findfield.php?TABLE=ON&GROUP1=CAT&GROUP2=AGE&EVENTS=ON&PERPAGE=1000&STATE%5B%5D=VT&VAX_YEAR_LOW=2014

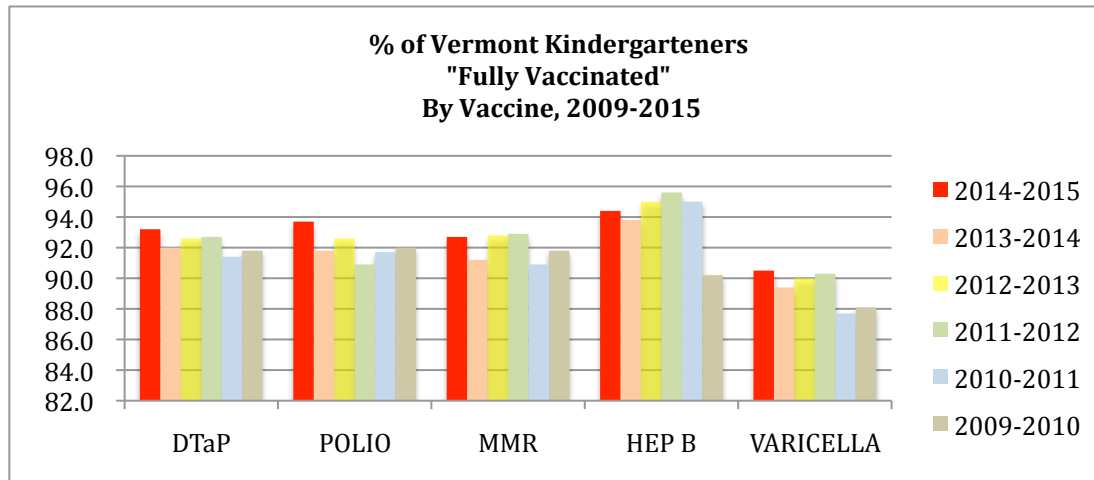
⁴ Over 1200 have been reported since liability protection law that established Vaccine Injury Court including 11 deaths http://medalerts.org/vaersdb/findfield.php?TABLE=ON&GROUP1=CAT&GROUP2=AGE&EVENTS=ON&PERPAGE=1500&STATE%5B%5D=VT&VAX_YEAR_LOW=1988.

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration, <http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation/data.html>

⁶ Mary Holland, Louis Conte, Robert Krakow, and Lisa Colin, Unanswered Questions from the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program: A Review of Compensated Cases of Vaccine-Induced Brain Injury, 28 Pace Envtl. L. Rev. 480 (2011) Available at: <http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/pelr/vol28/iss2/6>

*"During the 2014-15 school year, 87.7% of children entering kindergarten had received all required vaccines; the highest percent of fully immunized children entering kindergarten since immunization requirements were revised in 2008."*⁷

- Christine Finley, Immunization Program Manager, VT Department of Health, May 7, 2015



Since there is no Federal or State requirement for informed consent relating to immunization,⁸ and since doctors, public health officials and manufacturers cannot be held accountable for damage caused by vaccine products,⁹ our precious philosophical exemption is all that we have left as a safety valve to protect our children.

We are wondering what your administration expects from the affected families of the 3,479 school children who currently use the philosophical exemption. What should they do? Should they lie and claim religious exemptions? Should they quit their jobs and home school their children? Should they leave Vermont?

I truly hope that you will not allow for mandatory vaccination to be ushered into Vermont on your watch.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Stella, President
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⁷ <http://healthvermont.gov/hc/imm/ImmSurv.aspx>

⁸ According to CDC, "There is no Federal requirement for informed consent relating to immunization." Printed here: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/laws/>

⁹ The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (NCVIA) of 1986 (42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa- 1 to 300aa-34)