



ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ

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Ιερατικός Προϊστάμενος π. Πέτρος Σουριτζίδης



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Dear Senator Vitale and members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing to you on the occasion of the upcoming vote on the issue of vaccination religious exemption. I strongly support parents who based on their faith beliefs find it objectionable to vaccinate their children, especially considering the intense time schedule currently recommended by the medical field.

The reasons why as a man of faith, I support the above stated position are:

- ❖ Our children are a gift from God and we the parents are simply their custodians and caretakers in this life. We have a sacred duty to do for them the best we can and know how while the state should allow parents to have a clear conscience about how they conduct their parenthood. I would completely understand if a parent objects, based on faith, to inject their one-day old infant with the vaccine for Hepatitis B, a disease that is transmitted primarily through sex and illegal drug use needle sharing. We teach them to pray *"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works"* (Psalm 139), and yet one of our very first actions of caring for them should be one that shows that we do not trust God to take care of them not even for a few days or a few months? Is it so necessary that we must rush to "protect" God's work so urgently and immediately as if God drops them off and abandons them?
- ❖ I think you will agree that most young parents are not adequately prepared for all parenthood decisions. They decide on issues as they arise. It is perfectly reasonable to allow some time for prayerful contemplation on this important issue. When an adult prepares a living will with certain medical decisions and instructions (such as DNR), does so after a lot of thoughtful consideration with the benefit of life experience on their side. We should allow the same luxury of time to parents who need to consider things such as the child's developmental style, weather the child is of strong and robust nature or weak and feeble, the pediatricians advice, the environment in which the child is growing up, family history, etc. If they were to follow the medical profession recommendations, young parents are faced with the enormous decision to allow injecting their child with nine (9) vaccinations by the time they are two months old and with several dozens by the time they reach young adult age.
- ❖ For those who choose to do so, it is within the parent's rights and sacred obligation to consider the type and origin of substances in vaccines injected into their child.

The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, so based on faith convictions, I support those who object to some of the vaccine ingredients, which include known neurotoxins, Aluminum, Mercury, MSG, antibiotics, preservatives, (Formaldehyde), embryonic fluid from birds and animals and most importantly human diploid cells or residual proteins from aborted fetal tissue, thereby connecting certain vaccines with the abortion industry.

- ❖ I am a twenty three year Air Force Veteran, Wing Chaplain, Lt Col, having served twenty of those years right here at JBMDL, (McGuire Air Force Base). As you would imagine in order to be deployment ready over the years I received many vaccinations. When it came to Anthrax (a relatively new vaccine with long administration process and many known adverse and painful effects on military personnel), the Air Force decided to vaccinate only those who were “in the bucket” for deployment to an area where they were likely to become subjected to a biological warfare attack. Perhaps this wise approach can serve as a consideration prototype for the New Jersey lawmakers.
- ❖ Lastly as you prepare your decision please consider the following: How do you handle a case where a family has a second or third child and their first one nearly died in the emergency room after receiving a vaccination? Is it morally acceptable for the parents to put the younger siblings in harm’s way as well? Would they be responsible before man and God for their actions?

How about the many instances where children get sick even though they have been vaccinated?

In a 2010 study the USA was number 34th in infant mortality rate. In 33 nations around the globe, many of them less developed than ours, the rate was lower, for some less than half than that of the USA. Are all the chemicals we inject into our children really helping them?

The pharmaceutical industry is the number one reason for deaths in the world. When a person poisons another we call it murder and we put them in jail. When a company poisons a person we call it an undesirable side effect.

Senator and Committee Members, I realize you have a difficult decision before you. When I was asked to write this letter I did not realize the level of thought that is required. It is not a simple subject and it requires a lot of thought. There is not one size fits all solution, and at the very least I hope the committee allows those who are truly responsible for the lives of the children, the parents, to do their job. They are accountable to the One God. If the state removes their option, is the State ready to assume this accountability?

Thank you for your kind consideration, you and your colleagues are in our prayers.

Sincerely,

Fr. Peter G. Souritzidis

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