

Minor Consent Bill...OPPOSE...Bill # HB87/SB135

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My name is Lelane Schmitt, and I am submitting my written testimony in opposition to HS87/SB135. In the state of Maryland, the current rate of uptake for childhood/teen vaccines is already high, between 90 and 99%, with one exception...the HPV vaccine (60%). So it seems obvious that this bill's goal is to increase the rate of HPV vaccine use. This is deeply concerning because there is a great deal of controversy about the safety and efficacy of the HPV vaccine:

**It is marketed to prevent cervical cancer, yet there are no long-term studies backing this claim.*

**Cervical cancer is now rare in the United States, thanks to the use of Pap screenings, and HPV's clear on their own 95% of the time, so there is actually no need for this vaccine.*

**Clinical trials have shown that the vaccine actually increases the risk of cancer if HPV's are already present.*

**The number of reported fatal and serious injuries post HPV vaccination far outweighs the number of reported injuries for all other vaccines combined.*

**Many lawsuits, in the US and abroad, have been filed against the HPV vaccine, and some countries have even taken it off their list of recommended immunizations.*

Even more concerning is that this bill removes parental consent, assuming that a teen as young as 16 can fully understand the medical risks/benefits of the HPV vaccine, and assuming that a health care provider is able to determine whether or not the teen is capable of giving informed consent. I am the mother of two teenagers. They are both bright, well-educated young people, but there is no way they are fully able to comprehend the ramifications of consenting to a medical procedure. They rely on me and my husband for guidance regarding just about all decisions related to their health. My daughter, in particular, has a chronic auto-

immune condition, one that has required a lot of parental effort to become educated on how to help her. She could not begin to fully understand the possible risks to her health of consenting to the HPV vaccine. And relying solely on doctors to educate my children on vaccine safety would be negligent. Their pediatricians have not been at all well-informed of the risks of the HPV vaccine, a concern many of our friends and family have echoed of their own medical providers. It seems most doctors simply rely on the CDC website for up-to-date vaccine information, and that website is far from accurate:

Like any vaccine or medicine, HPV vaccination can cause side effects...the most common are mild and include:

- *Pain, redness, or swelling in the arm where the shot was given*
- *Dizziness or fainting (fainting after any vaccine, including HPV vaccine, is more common among adolescents)*
- *Nausea*
- *Headache*

The benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh any potential risk of side effects.

To prevent fainting and injuries related to fainting, adolescents should be seated or lying down during vaccination and remain in that position for 15 minutes after the vaccine is given.

(quoted from the CDC website, Feb 2020)

There is no mention here of the lack of scientific proof of cancer prevention or of the many reported cases of dangerous post-vaccine injuries and death. There is no mention that the rate of cervical cancer is minimal and that HPV's usually clear on their own. There is no mention of the possible increase in cancer risk if HPV's are present, and I know of no pediatrician who is screening her/his teen patients for HPV's before administration. The website warns of fainting, which by no means is "mild", especially if the parent is taken out of the picture for transportation and observation after injection. Not to mention the absurd fact that, should an adverse reaction occur, parents would then be back in the picture, expected to carry full responsibility for the care of their vaccine-injured teen.

HB87/SB135 is unnecessary, denies parental rights, and is potentially life-threatening. Please veto this bill!

