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LD 51

I am for the proposed legislation, LD 51, An Act to Restore Religious and Philosophical Exemptions to Immunization Requirements.

I am an engineer and a board certified anesthesiologist. In my 20+ years of clinical practice I, like all my colleagues in medicine, regularly encounter patients who choose treatment options different from our recommendations. We honor their wishes. This is a pillar of ethical medical practice, to obtain informed consent.

The reason why informed consent is vital in medicine is because there is so much uncertainty around the risk and benefit of our interventions. We each have a different relationship with uncertainty. Moreover, “facts” change. Countless drugs, biologic products, vaccines and interventions have been eliminated from our therapeutic arsenal as real world data became available.

Personally, I have cared for patients with belief systems that I do not subscribe to. For example, more than once I have had to promise a patient that I would not administer blood products to them during an operation, even if their life was in jeopardy because of their philosophical and religious position on the matter.

It is not up to me, a doctor, or you, legislators, to decide what constitutes a “valid” argument when it comes to a person’s philosophical or religious beliefs. The only ethical position is to honor their wishes, especially when there is so much that is unknown.

At this moment, the public is still unaware of the composition of the Covid-19 mRNA vaccines. Despite numerous requests under FOIA, much of the ingredient list remains redacted. How can we properly and honestly inform people if we, ourselves, do not know what exactly we are demanding that they put in their bodies?

History will not look kindly upon these last years when personal religious and philosophical beliefs have been decimated by the institution of medicine which ultimately is built upon immutable ethics, not science, which is constantly in flux.

Please restore these exemptions and bring ethics back to public health.