

December 31, 2015

Keith Grellner, Chair
Michele Davis, Executive Director
Washington State Board of Health
P.O. Box 47990
Olympia, WA 98504-7990

Dear Mr. Grellner and Ms. Davis,

I am writing today as the President of the National Meningitis Association (NMA), a non-profit organization whose mission is to raise awareness about bacterial meningitis and its prevention. Everyone involved in our organization has personally suffered from this disease.

I respectfully request the State Board of Health reconsider a meningococcal vaccine requirement as is done in so many states. Utah utilized the same evaluation criteria as Washington, and added the meningococcal vaccines to its required list. This year, New York and Ohio implemented vaccine mandates.

It is my hope and request that Washington State will join the many other states such as New York, Louisiana, Delaware, Missouri and Utah who have recently adopted rules or passed legislation requiring meningococcal vaccine(s), or are in the process of doing so. This is a link to meningococcal legislation/mandates currently in existence. It would be wonderful to add Washington to this list.

<http://www.nmaus.org/state-meningococcal-disease-policies/>

In my research, I learned that one of the most recent states to adopt such a rule requiring Meningococcal vaccination for school entry was Utah, who also utilized similar review criteria as Washington. I have enclosed a copy of the Utah review which was used by their board when they voted to adopt a rule for Meningitis requirements.

In the alternative, NMA would like to suggest that the committee table the vote on adding a meningococcal vaccine requirement until it can address the second of the TAG's recommendations which was to review the state's 2006 adopted school entry mandate criteria. As interpreted by the TAG, the criteria do not seem to fit the profile of many newer ACIP recommended childhood vaccines, and as a result, there is a growing gap between what is recommended by the ACIP and what is recommended to parents for school entry. It would be unfortunate for Washington to lose school entry and parent education requirements as an effective tool for improving childhood vaccination rates and promoting better public health.



www.nmaus.org
www.preteenvaccines.org

As a parent whose son died from meningococcal disease, I have personally witnessed the devastating effects of this preventable disease. We have many advocates within Washington who have similarly suffered tragic losses. This disease is rare, but when it strikes, it is deadly.

I urge you to please review this vaccine for inclusion into your state's requirement. It's the right thing to do – we need to protect our children.

Thank you for your consideration.

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

Lynn Bozof, President
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