

COUNTY OF OTTAWA

STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, held at the Fillmore Street Complex in the Township of Olive, Michigan on the 22nd day of August, 2023 at 6:30 PM local time.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Roger Belknap, Rebekah Curran, Allison Miedema, Kyle Terpstra, Gretchen Cosby, Douglas Zylstra, Roger Bergman, Jacob Bonnema, Sylvia Rhodea, Lucy Ebel, Joe Moss.

ABSENT: Commissioners: None.

It was moved by Commissioner Allison Miedema and supported by Commissioner Rebekah Curran that the following Resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners ("Board") swore an oath to uphold the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Michigan, which protect the natural, God-given rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These Constitutions not only guarantee these freedoms, they also protect and guard against government infringing on these rights; and

WHEREAS, the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protects the rights of parents to make decisions concerning the care of their children and the right to make medical decisions on behalf of their children; and

WHEREAS, Michigan Revised School Code, MCL 380.10, affirms, "It is the natural, fundamental right of parents and legal guardians to determine and direct the care, teaching, and education of their children;" and

WHEREAS, constitutional freedoms are not suspended in times of crisis or everyday life, at the whim of elected officials, unelected health officials, or for the benefit of government bureaucracy or private institutions; and

WHEREAS, Michigan law provides exemptions to childhood vaccine requirements for school and licensed childcare programs for medical, religious, or other reasons, as follows:

MCL 333.9215 Exemptions.

(1) A child is exempt from the requirements of this part as to a specific immunization for any period of time as to which a physician certifies that a specific immunization is or may be detrimental to the child's health or is not appropriate.

(2) A child is exempt from this part if a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis of the child presents a written statement to the administrator of the child's school or operator of the group program to the effect that the requirements of this part cannot be met because of religious convictions or other objection to immunization; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) enacted Administrative Rule 325.176 (12) on January 1, 2015, requiring parents or guardians who want a religious or philosophical exemption from one or more vaccines for their child(ren), to attend a vaccine education session at their local health department and obtain a state-issued certified waiver; and

WHEREAS, the Ottawa County Department of Public Health provides waiver appointments as established by MDHHS Administrative Rule; and

WHEREAS, the Board respects the right of parents to choose to vaccinate or to exempt their child from one or more vaccines, and acknowledges differing conclusions and practices exist within the medical community regarding the risk-benefit assessment of vaccines and communicable diseases; and

WHEREAS, the Board acknowledges individual genetic risks and contraindications exist regarding vaccines and medical interventions, and respects the right of parents and individuals to make personal medical decisions free of pressure and coercion; and

WHEREAS, the Board values the ethical standard of fully informed consent regarding both the risks and benefits of vaccines, to include full disclosure of ingredients, as well as the adverse effects of vaccines as reported to VAERS, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, established as the national safety surveillance program; and

WHEREAS, the Board respects the religious, moral, and ethical considerations of vaccines developed or manufactured using fetal cells from aborted infants, such as vaccines for chickenpox, rubella, hepatitis A, measles, mumps, rubella, and certain Covid-19 vaccines.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners respects the individual freedoms and parental rights of the people of Ottawa County to make choices regarding childhood vaccines; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board recommends that Ottawa County promotion of vaccines for school and licensed childcare programs include full and accurate information regarding available exemptions and waivers from vaccine requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board recommends that vaccine waiver sessions include information on both the risks and the benefits of vaccines, a copy of vaccine package inserts, vaccine ingredients, and a link to VAERS data; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution shall be sent to Senators Mark Huizenga, Roger Victory, and Rick Outman, Representatives Nancy DeBoer, Luke Meerman, Brad Slagh, Rachelle Smit, and Greg VanWoerkom, and the Clerk of each county in the State of Michigan.

YEAS: Commissioners: Roger Belknap, Rebekah Curran, Allison Miedema, Kyle Terpstra, Gretchen Cosby, Jacob Bonnema, Sylvia Rhodea, Lucy Ebel, Joe Moss.

NAYS: Commissioners: Douglas Zylstra and Roger Bergman.

ABSTENTIONS: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED:



Joe Moss, Chairperson, Ottawa County Board of Commissioners



Justin Roebuck, Ottawa County Clerk/Register