

February 11, 2025

Dear Members of the House Health Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee:

My name is Dominic Geffken, MD, MPH. I am a Family Physician that practices and lives in Concord NH. I have been practicing medicine in New Hampshire for over 20 years. I am writing this letter to ask you to **Oppose House Bill 524** which proposes the elimination of the New Hampshire Vaccine Association (NHVA). As a Family Physician and someone who understands the importance of Public Health policy, I am confident in saying that House Bill 524 is a short sighted piece of legislation that would make New Hampshire's Children vulnerable to preventable infectious diseases.

The current childhood immunization schedule is supported by a robust evidence base demonstrating its safety and efficacy. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which advises the CDC, plays a pivotal role in developing these schedules. The ACIP's recommendations are based on comprehensive reviews of clinical data, including the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases, vaccine safety, and cost-effectiveness analyses.<sup>[1]</sup> The ACIP's guidelines are endorsed by several professional societies, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, ensuring a broad consensus within the medical community.<sup>[2]</sup>

Multiple studies have confirmed the safety of the recommended immunization schedule. For instance, a systematic review and meta-analysis found no significant associations between vaccines and serious adverse events, except for rare occurrences such as febrile seizures with the MMR vaccine, which are outweighed by the benefits of vaccination.<sup>[3]</sup> Additionally, research using the Vaccine Safety Datalink has shown no increased risk of all-cause mortality among children vaccinated according to the schedule compared to those who are under-vaccinated.<sup>[4]</sup> These findings collectively support the safety and effectiveness of the current childhood immunization schedule, reinforcing its critical role in preventing infectious diseases and promoting public health.

As a Family Medicine Physician, I know that the NH Vaccine Association's (NHVA) financing model has allowed us to immunize thousands of children over the time I have practiced without cost to our practice or to our patients. There are few preventive measures as evidence-based, as effective, and as potentially lifesaving as routine immunization of children against these preventable diseases, that would otherwise cause significant morbidity and mortality.

In summary, I urge you to **vote against HB 524** in the Committee Hearing.

Thank you for your consideration of my position. I would be glad to discuss this bill further if you feel I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,



Dominic F. Geffken, MD, MPH

## References:

1. Protecting the Public's Health: Critical Functions of the Section 317 Immunization Program-a Report of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee.

Public Health Reports (Washington, D.C. : 1974). 2013 Mar-Apr;128(2):78-95.  
doi:10.1177/003335491312800203.

2. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger - United States, 2022.

Wodi AP, Murthy N, Bernstein H, et al.

MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. 2022;71(7):234-237. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7107a2.

3. Safety of Vaccines Used for Routine Immunization in the United States: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.

Gidengil C, Goetz MB, Newberry S, et al. Vaccine. 2021;39(28):3696-3716.  
doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2021.03.079.

4. Patterns of Childhood Immunization and All-Cause Mortality.

McCarthy NL, Sukumaran L, Newcomer S, et al.

Vaccine. 2017;35(48 Pt B):6643-6648. doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2017.10.034.