FORMAL LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY ON NH HB 1811

Sponsor: Members of the Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee
Subject: Opposition to HB 1811 — Repeal of Immunization Requirements
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Executive Summary

HB 1811 would:

- Repeal all state immunization requirements for *school and child-care enrollment*.
- Prohibit vaccine requirements for access to public services (e.g., schools, day care).
- Convert *public health protections* into *optional recommendations* with no enforcement tools.

Public-Health Risks of HB 1811:

- Immunization requirements are a *proven mechanism* for achieving high vaccine coverage.
- Measles, once eliminated, is resurging in the U.S. due to declining vaccination rates.
- Community (herd) immunity for measles requires ≥*95 %* coverage; current U.S. coverage (~92.5 %) is below this threshold.
- South Carolina's ongoing outbreak shows 94 % of cases in unvaccinated individuals.

Economic Costs of Outbreaks:

- Average *public-health response cost per measles case* is tens of thousands of dollars.
- One outbreak model estimates ~$59,996 per case.
- Clark County outbreak (2019) cost ~$47,479 per case overall (including response and productivity loss).

Scientific Consensus on Vaccine Effectiveness:

- Two doses of MMR vaccine ~97 % effective at preventing measles.
- Immunization coverage ≥95 % is critical to prevent outbreaks.

KEY FACTS & DATA POINTS

Scientific Evidence

- **MMR Effectiveness:**
  "Two doses of the MMR vaccine in childhood are about *97 % effective* at preventing measles…"
- **Herd/Community Immunity Threshold:**
  "When more than *95 %* of people in a community are vaccinated, most are protected through community immunity."
- **Current U.S. Coverage:**
  National kindergarten MMR coverage ~92.5 %, below the *95 % threshold* needed to consistently prevent outbreaks.
- **MMR Coverage Trends:**
  Coverage for measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines has *declined* nationwide from historic levels, reducing population protection.

PUBLIC-HEALTH IMPACT OF LOWER VACCINATION RATES

Measles Outbreaks Resurgent:

- South Carolina's outbreak has *hundreds of confirmed cases*, largely among the unvaccinated, and involves quarantines to stop transmission.
- The U.S. recorded the *highest number of measles cases in decades*, threatening the continued elimination status.

Harm to Vulnerable Populations:

- Lower vaccination means greater risk to *infants too young to vaccinate*, *immune-compromised individuals*, and those who cannot mount an adequate vaccine response.

ECONOMIC COSTS OF OUTBREAK RESPONSE

- A JHU analysis estimated average costs of outbreak response at **~$43,000 per measles case**.
- Another model estimated *~$59,996 per case* when including medical and societal costs.
- The 2019 Clark County outbreak incurred ~$47,479 per case overall—primarily in public health and lost productivity costs.

Cost Implications for New Hampshire:

- Repealing vaccine requirements almost certainly *increases outbreak risk*, leading to higher emergency response costs.
- Local health departments would face *expanded staffing, testing, contact tracing, quarantine enforcement, and community outreach* expenses.

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS FOR COMMITTEE

- **Maintaining immunization requirements saves lives and money.**
- **Eliminating requirements undermines public health and places vulnerable residents at risk.**
- **Federal guidance (CDC schedule changes) does not negate the need for *state level requirements* to achieve high, uniform coverage.**
- **Prevention (vaccination) is dramatically less costly and more effective than outbreak response.**

References (Selected):
1. CDC. Measles Immunization Coverage and Community Protection (≥95% threshold).
2. CDC. Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine Effectiveness (~97% with two doses).
3. CDC & Johns Hopkins. U.S. Kindergarten Vaccination Coverage Reports showing coverage below herd immunity threshold.
4. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Estimating the Financial Costs of Measles Outbreaks (~$43,000–$60,000 per case).
5. CDC. Clark County, Washington Measles Outbreak Cost Analysis (2019) (~$47,000 per case).
6. CDC & State Health Departments. Multi-state measles outbreaks demonstrating increased risk from lowered coverage.