

4 October 2015

Ms Elizabeth Blandthorn, Chairperson
and members of the
Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Ms Blandthorn and Committee members,

Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab No Play) Bill 2015

I write to Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee to respectfully oppose the proposed "No jab No play" bill which breaches the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (Charter). I believe the proposed bill trespasses unduly upon rights and freedoms of many families and children in the following ways according to the Charter:

1. Section 17 & 10. Families are entitled to be protected by society and the state. Every child has the right, without discrimination, to such protection as is in his or her best interests and is needed by him or her by reason of being a child. Any individual and especially a young child should not be the subject of cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

The proposed bill discriminates against healthy children and their right to receive valuable education through public/private Early Childhood Services (ECS). This type of discrimination is unwarranted in a society where voluntary vaccination rates in young children are already at very high levels. A family has every lawful right to decide what is best for the health and wellbeing of their child and if an unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated child is clearly showing signs of good health, they must not be discriminated against. Especially not in a manner that proposes to degrade these healthy young children as though they are all disease riddled and contagious.

As a fair society we do not (and never should) treat someone inhumanely even if they are known to be infected with a contagious disease or virus for example, HIV, Hepatitis C, herpes, chickenpox, or a cold. We do not deny them a place in education or social contact within a free living society. Why then must the Government bill propose to cruelly reject a young child from attending an ECS when he/she is perfectly healthy?

Families are the fundamental group unit of society and parents are (and must always remain to be) the loving, nurturing, protective, primary carers of their children. Every child and their health and wellbeing is rightfully the primary responsibility of the parents making informed, un-biased, educated choices on the medication of themselves and their family, not by Government coercion or enforcement.

Families or individuals should not be coerced to accept external sources dictating how to establish their own health and wellbeing. It is a basic human right to make an educated decision on what substances goes into you and your young family member's body. I personally believe good health and wellbeing cannot be achieved by vaccinations alone. However, if slightly higher than current vaccination rates are deemed beneficial then thorough and un-biased education is key. Parents should be further assisted to make free and informed decisions by ensuring they are fully educated on all the benefits and all risks involved for each vaccination proposed to be given to their children. This should occur months prior to the proposed administration of the vaccination. Any questions and concerns raised by parents or individuals should not be confronted by virtual bullying and propaganda, this only causes a negative impact of harm, confusion and loss of trust.

2. Section 13. A person has the right not to have his or her family or home unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with and not to have his or her reputation unlawfully attacked.

The proposed bill's ECS enrolment requirements unjustly interfere with some families' functionality and finances. It also unlawfully attacks the reputations of the parents by giving Government and Pharmaceutical companies, greater authority than parents over our own children.

Medication of any sort is not a one size fits all. Parents know their children best including their likes, dislikes, actions and reactions often better than the children themselves. For example, very often only parents can accurately predict how their child will react or behave given certain food, animals, people, plants or circumstances in general. Parents always make the good judgement on how their child can best approach the given circumstance. This decision making process and our reputations as responsible parents are being condemned by the proposed bill amendments.

Denying a healthy child from a public education by way of the proposed removal of the "conscientious objection" status will for some parents mean being forced to home school their children. These families may be unjustly subjected to immense disruption as they may not be able to financially manage on one income to pay off their mortgage and other bills. Worse still, some single parents may be put under even further strain as they may feel forced to leave the workplace altogether to home school their children. Potentially it puts unnecessary pressure on the Government to financially support these parents during their difficult times.

3. Section 14 & 15. Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief and freedom of expression should not be coerced in a way that limits the freedom or beliefs that person/s engages

The proposed bill essentially removes the rights of parents and their children to uphold their beliefs by limiting their rights as parents to freedom of conscience, religious or ethical opinion without interference.

There is an unwarranted demand on some parents to go against their wishes to delay or refuse even a single vaccine they deem as unnecessary for their child, just so the child can attend an ECS. Some parents have concerns regarding some vaccines (such as MMR) contain

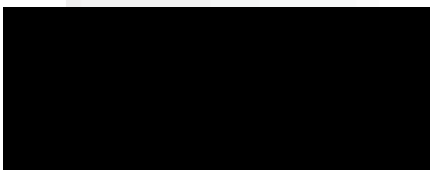
genetically modified and immortalised human embryonic cells and believe those vaccines to be against our religious and ethical beliefs and should not be injected into any human. Many of these vaccines admit (in their respective leaflets) they have not been tested for genetical mutational implications nor tested for their carcinogenicity levels. Therefore some of these vaccines should be considered as still being in experimental stage. These beliefs and concerns are valid should not need to be unjustly compromised.

Consider the future. If a conscientious objection is removed through this proposed bill based on the current vaccination schedule it unwittingly starts us down an ugly spiral towards freedom's demise where any child, parent or individual will be forced to be injected with any/all (200+ pipelined) future vaccinations deemed necessary, no questions asked. We may not know exactly what the future of vaccines and proposed future vaccine schedules are going to be but I propose more intelligent alternative initiatives than unwarranted enforcement, especially in a society with such proven high and stable voluntary vaccination rates for young children.

Much of society's populous (children and adults) are not up-to-date with their recommended vaccinations (note: not enforced vaccinations – and never should be). All ECS aged young children will in their day to day activities encounter vast numbers of people in free society who are defined as not fully vaccinated, so it is unwarranted to propose that a not fully vaccinated young child be denied enrolment in an ECS as though it is the only environment where diseases and viruses are transmitted.

Considering my above statements, I propose retaining - and never removing - the conscientious objection status as it is a clear breach of the Charter in at least the many ways reasoned above.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Tania Konkell.

Tania Konkell