



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 30, 2015

California Legislature Approves One of the Strictest Vaccination Mandates in the U.S.

On Monday, lawmakers in California passed one of the toughest mandatory vaccination requirements in the country, which would end exemptions from state immunizations laws based on religious or personal beliefs, by a vote of 24-14 in the state Senate. Mississippi and West Virginia are the only other states with such strict requirements.

The *Los Angeles Times* [reports](#) that the measure is “among the most controversial taken up by the Legislature this year” and requires more children who enter day care and school to be vaccinated against diseases including measles and whooping cough.



The new measure permits exemptions only for those with allergies and immune system deficiencies and no longer allows California’s personal belief exemption.

If the measure becomes law, it could impact more than 13,500 California kindergarten students who currently have waivers for vaccinations based on their parents’ beliefs, the *Times* reports.

The bill was introduced by Democratic Senators Richard Pan of Sacramento and Ben Allen of Santa Monica following an outbreak of the measles at Disneyland last December. The authors agreed to a grandfather clause that would allow those who have utilized the religious exemption to keep it until their next vaccine checkpoint.

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The measure, reports ABC News, prompted “the most heated legislative debate of the year,” as parents took to social media and flooded the Capitol to oppose the bill at legislative hearings. Lawmakers from both parties came to their defense and argued on behalf of parental rights.

Assemblyman Mike Gatto, a Glendale Democrat, voted against the bill, saying it violated parental rights. “The broadness of this bill likely dooms it from a constitutional standpoint,” Gatto said, and accused lawmakers of “infringing on the rights of children to attend school.”

Opponents of the measure argued that vaccines are unsafe and that the bill violates their privacy and parental rights.

“This bill puts the state between children and parents regardless of your position on vaccination,” said Luke Van der Westhuyzem, a parent from Walnut Creek who protested the bill.

Parents who refuse vaccinations can homeschool their children, and as such, Senator Joel Anderson, (R-Alpine) argues that the measure should have had provisions in place for parents who opt to take their children out of public school.

“It doesn’t provide that the districts in any way are financially responsible for those students who are



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denied a public education,” said Anderson.

If it becomes law, California will have one of the strictest vaccine restrictions in the country. The *Wall Street Journal* elaborates, “Most states give religious exemptions, and 20 states permit philosophical exemptions, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.” The only states that do not permit religious or personal-belief exemptions are Mississippi and West Virginia.

Those who supported the measure argued that the safety of vaccinations is virtually indisputable.

“The science remains unequivocal that vaccines are safe, that vaccines save lives,” Pan said.

But evidence seems to point to the contrary.

As the measles outbreak is what prompted California’s sudden push for forced vaccinations, *The New American* [evaluated](#) measles data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

The deaths of more than 100 children have been officially linked to receiving a measles vaccine during the past decade, according to the federal government’s Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Yet the childhood measles mortality count over the same period remains at zero, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Put another way, in the last 10 years an American child would have been highly more likely to die after receiving a measles shot than from contracting the disease itself. Thousands more have suffered from adverse reactions to the measles inoculation and other vaccines. The explosive numbers have massive implications for public health efforts, analysts say.

The National Vaccine Information Center, a non-profit educational organization and patient advocacy group that opposes government mandates on the issue, notes on its website that the measles vaccine does not necessarily protect a person from measles.

“Evidence has been published in the medical literature that vaccinated persons can get measles because either the measles vaccine fails to provide temporary vaccine-acquired immunity or the vaccine’s effectiveness wanes over time,” the website reported. In fact, it’s possible that vaccines provide just temporary protection, leaving immunized individuals vulnerable to measles in their adult life, when the disease is said to be more dangerous.

Furthermore, the measles vaccination has been connected to serious complications. The late Dr. Robert Mendelsohn, author of *How to Raise a Healthy Child ... In Spite of Your Doctor*, noted in his health newsletter *The People’s Doctor*: “The measles vaccine is associated with encephalopathy and with a series of other complications such as SSPE (subacute sclerosing panencephalitis), which causes hardening of the brain and is invariably fatal.”

“Other neurologic and sometimes fatal conditions associated with the measles vaccine include ataxia (inability to coordinate muscle movements), mental retardation, aseptic meningitis, seizure disorders, and hemiparesis (paralysis affecting one side of the body),” Dr. Mendelsohn continued. “Secondary complications associated with the vaccine may be even more frightening. They include encephalitis, juvenile-onset diabetes, Reye’s syndrome, and multiple sclerosis.”

Furthermore, the controversy surrounding the California measure is driven less by whether vaccinations have value and more by whether the government has a [right](#) to mandate vaccinations, and in a free society, the answer is simply no.

Some medical organizations such as the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons ([AAPS](#)) recognizes that government-mandated vaccinations “violate the medical ethic of informed consent.”



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In a 1999 statement to the U.S. House Government Reform Committee, AAPS Executive Director Jane Orient, M.D., remarked on forced vaccinations and the impact they have on the patient/physician dynamic. "The relationship of patient and physician is shattered; in administering the vaccine, the physician is serving as the agent of the state," she said.

According to Orient, in administering a mandated vaccine, the physician is ultimately violating the Hippocratic Oath. "Instead," she continues, the physician "is applying the new population-based ethic in which the interests of the individual patient may be sacrificed to the 'needs of society.'"

It is unclear whether California's Democratic Governor Jerry Brown will be signing the bill into law. He has until July 13 to do so.

"The governor believes that vaccinations are profoundly important and a major public health benefit, and any bill that reaches his desk will be closely considered," governor's spokesman Evan Westrup has repeated in recent days.

But a parent group called A Voice for Choice has indicated that it will challenge the measure in court if Governor Brown signs it.

"We are pulling out all the stops," said Christina Hildebrand, the group's spokeswoman. "This bill is unconstitutional."

Other parents have made similar declarations. "I will sue to put my child in school," said Jude Tovatt, a Roseville parent of an eight-year-old child. "I will not run from the state that is our home."



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