

Dear Members of the House Health Care Committee,

My name is Heather Brandi. I live in Beaverton, OR, and I am writing to you in opposition of HB 3063.

My child is one who would suffer greatly if this bill was passed. Ever since she was born, her body has reacted to all kinds of innocuous things - from foods through my milk, to chemicals in the environment. She has had eczema since birth that covered her body, she was constantly itchy, uncomfortable, and in pain as a baby. She had reflux and was colicky. She never slept. All she did was cry, all day, every day. The only relief came when I made some severe and extreme changes to our life. I had to change everything we used - all of our laundry products, household cleaning products, hygienic products (not only the ones that were used on her directly, but the ones that could come in contact with her, through my usage of them), and even her diapers. I had to change our entire diet. We did an elimination diet, waiting months for everything to clear out of both my milk and her system. I had to make sure that everything both she and I (as her breastfeeding mother) consumed was organic, pesticide free, had no possibility of cross contamination, all of the meat that we ate was organic, and grassfed or pasture raised. I shopped exclusively at local farmer's markets so that I could ask questions and learn about the farms and ranches where we got our food from. And once I made all of those changes, she finally, finally, got some relief. Her skin cleared up. Her reflux went away. She started sleeping! Her little tiny body had been out of control her whole life, and now with all of these toxins (including things that aren't even toxic at all for most people) were removed, her body was finally able to function as it should.

Based on her symptoms, I have delayed vaccinating her, because it has always been clear to me that her body was not able to handle it. I have suspected for many years that she has a MTHFR mutation. Her pediatrician here in Oregon suspected the same. I finally did some genetic testing, and it turns out that she does have one of the gene variants. While it is rather complicated, it means that her body does not detoxify properly or as effectively as it should. This is not at all a surprise to me, as I've been able to see that for years. Vaccines can cause serious damage to a person's body when their body is not able to detox the vaccine properly. This information has reaffirmed my belief that vaccinating her would be harmful.

However, according to the CDC, for most vaccines, the only contraindication listed is having had a bad reaction to a previous dose of that same vaccine. Actually having your child suffer one or multiple vaccine reactions cannot and should not be the only way. As Oregon assesses all medical exemptions based on this criteria, I would not be able to get a medical exemption for her.

My child is an extrovert. She thrives on social interactions. I had actually always planned to homeschool my children. I am well educated, and spent a lot of time researching the way that children learn. But it was apparent to me very soon after she was born that this child would not thrive in a homeschool setting. She loves being around people, and being surrounded with friends. When she was a toddler, I

used to joke that I was merely the director of her social calendar, because she needed so much social interaction. Every day she'd ask me who we were going to see, and if we didn't have plans, she'd go through a list of her friends and ask me to find out if they were available that day. Preschool was amazing for her, but even that wasn't enough time. Finally, now, in kindergarten, she is feeling fulfilled. She is at an amazing school, with superb teachers who really care about the children and treat them with respect, and a wonderful, strong community. If I was going to send my child to a public school instead of homeschooling, this school is everything that I would have hoped for. I am immensely grateful to have found such a perfect fit.

If this bill passes and becomes law, I will be forced to choose between keeping my child's body safe and keeping her mind safe. I will be forced to do serious harm to her as a person, no matter what I choose. As her mother, it is my job to make the decisions that will be best for her. And without being able to get her a vaccine exemption for school, I will have no way to do what is best for her in the state of Oregon. This is a devastating situation to be put in. I love it here. I have lived in many places, and this is where I chose to raise my child. This is where my daughter and I consider home. We have an amazing community of friends that we have built up over the years, people who I would trust with my life and with my daughter's life. They are our chosen family. And now we have a similar community at her school. The thought of having to leave this school, and possibly even having to leave the state, is simply heartbreaking. I can't even allow myself to think about what it would mean if this bill passes, because all of the options that will remain at this point are simply unbearable.

Please vote no on HB 3063. Allow parents to retain the right to make important medical decisions for their children, and allow children to continue to have equal access to education in Oregon.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Heather Brandi