

**Missouri State Medical Association
House of Delegates**

Resolution #6
(A-20)

Introduced by: Sarah Cohen, Washington University School of Medicine;
Genevieve Tuite, Washington University School of Medicine;
Anna Holten, Washington University School of Medicine;
and the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society

Subject: Non-medical Exemptions for Immunizations

Referred to: Reference Committee B

1 WHEREAS, immunizations have been proven to be an effective method at preventing communicable
2 diseases that cause significant morbidity and mortalityⁱ and require a certain percentage of the
3 population to be vaccinated to adequately protect the communityⁱⁱ; and
4

5 WHEREAS, Missouri's children have the lowest rates of mumps, measles and rubella immunization and
6 are in the bottom 25th percentile for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus; polio; varicella; hepatitis A; and
7 pneumococcal immunizations; as well as the 50th percentile for haemophilus influenza type B and 60th
8 percentile for hepatitis B immunizations compared to other statesⁱⁱⁱ; and
9

10 WHEREAS, Missouri's vaccination rates have declined in recent years as religious exemptions have
11 increased^{iv}; and
12

13 WHEREAS, only Dutch Reform Congregations and Faith Healing Denominations of Christianity (Faith
14 Tabernacle; Church of the First Born; Faith Assembly; Endtime Ministries; Church of Christ, Scientist)
15 have demonstrated religious opposition to immunization^v; and
16

17 WHEREAS, the American Medical Association, as stated in resolution H-440.970, supports legislation
18 eliminating non-medical exemptions from immunization and encourages state medical associations to
19 seek removal of non-medical exemptions in statutes requiring mandatory immunizations, including for
20 childcare and school attendance; therefore be it
21

22 RESOLVED, that our Missouri State Medical Association support the elimination of non-medical
23 (religious, philosophical, or personal) exemptions from mandated pediatric immunizations and, in the
24 alternative, support stricter guidelines for religious exemptions to immunizations.

Fiscal Note:

Current Policy:

References:

ⁱ The Childhood Immunization Schedule and Safety: Stakeholder Concerns, Scientific Evidence, and Future Studies. Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. January 2013. doi:10.17226/13563.

ⁱⁱ “Herd Immunity (Herd Protection).” University of Oxford: Oxford Vaccine Group: Vaccine Knowledge Project. August 2019. vk.ovg.ox.ac.uk/vk/herd-immunity.

ⁱⁱⁱ “ChildVaxView.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. November 2017.

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/childvaxview/data-reports/index.html.

^{iv} Missouri School Immunization Rates: Kindergarten. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. March 2019. <https://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/immunizations/pdf/KindergartenData.pdf>

^v Occupational Health Clinic. “Vanderbilt Faculty & Staff Health and Wellness.” Immunizations and Religion | Vanderbilt Faculty & Staff Health and Wellness. August 2013. www.vumc.org/health-wellness/news-resource-articles/immunizations-and-religion.

