

To Whom It May Concern:

We are opposing HF874

I am very concerned about the safety and well-being of my child who is highly allergic and has compromised immune system if our legal rights are stripped away with the new bill HF874 amendment proposal. Because of her special needs, I had to step away from my career because of severe health concerns and the liability at stake if something happened to her under someone else's care.

We have had a doctor's excuse recommending limiting my daughter's exposure during flu season for years. A simple cold makes her severely sick systemically for over 2 months. The fear has only escalated with COVID-19. We also have excuses for medical reasons for no further vaccinations because of the unknowns she is highly allergic to with fear of vaccination injury, serious reactions, or death from the preservatives and excipients they contain. Public schools require vaccinations to be up to date and may soon require COVID-19 vaccinations. We cannot take this serious health risk going against doctor recommendations of what is best for my child. I have two autoimmune disorders that are hereditary on top of my daughter's already serious health concerns and leave neither of us as candidates for vaccinations.

We have had to remove her promptly from public bathrooms including clinic settings from disinfectants/chemicals used making her pale, eyes dilated and almost passing out needing fresh air. She has passed out just from the smell of peanuts and several unknowns along with if she has come in skin contact with any surface having to wash her skin immediately before serious allergic reaction escalated.

With the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 constantly near our doorstep, the fear has intensified for protecting our daughter. While we appreciate MN lawmakers wanting to provide a quality public education for every child, not every child can fit into the public school setting due to the special needs of each individual child. But, the amendment does not allow for this distinction.

We live in a remote rural area that leaves distance and travel difficult especially in our unpredictable MN winters. Our daughter requires more sleep than the average child because of her compromised immune system. She often times is up in the middle of the night with her complicated digestive system with acid reflux from possible EE or EGID not confirmed because of the dangers of anesthesia to biopsy her esophagus in her vulnerable stage of severe allergies we are hoping she will outgrow. This leaves her to have to sleep in later on some mornings. We would have over an hour and a half drive daily with good road conditions [to get to school?]. Many days we would be tardy causing distractions coming into the classroom late, which would count against daily attendance.

Our daughter cannot take vitamin/mineral supplements to help build up her immune system because of their unknown sourced origins. She must receive her nutrients through a special limited rotation diet only. With her digestion concerns daily, my daughter has to eat her meals and drink her liquids very slowly while separating her drink a half hour after solids because of her acid reflux. She would have to eat during class time because of the limited lunchtime and breaks allotted in a public school setting. This would also be a distraction to not only her but also her fellow students learning, not to mention unsanitary and a hassle carrying her lunch and books from room to room. Plus, the peer pressure she would endure because she requires special needs.

As a mother, the safety and protection in a more controlled environment is a must for my only child. Who would be held responsible if my daughter's health conditions worsen or if she dies because she had to attend public school?

Please reconsider the wording in your amendment to respect parental rights to decide what is best for their child. Please do not take away our right to homeschool in our beautiful state of Minnesota so we don't have to uproot our home to start over in another state that respects that every child is different and may require special needs for even just survival.

While many students thrive in a public school setting, my child could die.

Please consider and remember my child while reviewing and signing your signature HF874.

This is not mentioning the continual anxiety, emotional, mental and psychological trauma this new amendment would cause worrying about dying daily living outside of her controlled environment and surroundings.

Life in itself is scary and unpredictable on a daily basis and the fears of the unknown future that lies ahead for my daughter's immune system. We need to do all we can to ensure a bright future by protecting this vulnerable season of her life presently.

Thank you for your time and serious reconsiderations.

Upon request, may I ask for an email response so as to know you have read about our deep concerns that could affect the rest of our lives?

Sincerely,

Shenda Skalski

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