

# PROTECTING RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION IN VIRGINIA

**In 2016, HB1342 was introduced to remove the right to object to vaccination for religious reasons and to strictly narrow medical exemptions.**

**VIOLATION OF EXISTING LAW:** Removing the religious exemption to vaccination will prevent Virginia citizens from exercising freedom of conscience, which is protected in the Virginia Constitution and was reaffirmed by the *2007 Religious Freedom Act* and the *2013 Parental Rights Act* guaranteeing freedom of religion and the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education and care of their children.

**NO COMPELLING STATE INTEREST:** There is no public health emergency in Virginia to justify removal of the religious vaccine exemption.

- **Virginia Vaccination Rates in 2015 – 94% of Kindergartners in compliance, 95% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders vaccinated**
- **Virginia is in the top 1/3 of states for good health and exceeds Healthy People 2020 goals**
- **In 2014, Virginia's vaccine exemption rate was only 1.1%, among the lowest in the nation**
- **Over 85% of children with vaccine exemptions receive some vaccines**
- **Virginia ranked 10<sup>th</sup> among all states with low infectious disease rates**
- **Cases of pertussis and mumps are related to poor vaccine effectiveness, not due to vaccine exemptions**

**VACCINES CARRY RISK OF HARM:** Vaccines are pharmaceutical products that carry a risk of injury and death, which can be greater for individuals with genetic, biological and environmental high risk factors that science has not defined and doctors often cannot predict.

**Only between 1 and 10% of reactions are reported to the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS).**

**12,406 vaccine reaction reports submitted to VAERS from Virginia**

75% considered serious; 77 deaths; 168 disabled; 500 ER visits; 600 hospitalized; 56 prolonged hospitalization; 200 life threatening

**3500 vaccine reaction reports were in children 18 years and younger in Virginia**

81% considered serious; 56 deaths; 80 disabled, 2200 ER visits; 350 hospitalizations; 23 prolonged hospitalization; 86 life threatening

**NO LIABILITY:** Under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, nearly \$3.4 Billion in federal vaccine injury compensation has been paid to victims of vaccine related injuries and death. There is no liability for providers or manufacturers, even if the vaccine could have been made safer. Two out of three people who apply for vaccine injury compensation are turned away without an award.

**MANY NEW VACCINES ARE COMING:** 1983 CDC Policy - 23 doses of 7 vaccines by age 6 and \$80 cost to vaccinate a child  
2016 CDC Policy – 69 doses of 16 vaccines by age 18 and \$2800 cost to vaccinate a child

There are hundreds of new vaccines in the research pipeline, including vaccines for salmonella, e-coli, strep B, hepatitis C, HIV, herpes, asthma, obesity, heroin and cocaine addiction. Many will be recommended by public health officials for universal use by all children.

**Every vaccine that CDC recommends for children is protected from product liability under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act.**

When there is a risk of harm from a pharmaceutical product recommended by government and mandated by the state, especially a product that is marketed by companies completely shielded from liability, the parent's right to exercise conscience, religious belief and informed consent on behalf of their minor child must be legally protected.



The National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) is dedicated to the prevention of vaccine injuries and deaths through public education and to defending the informed consent ethic in medicine.

*The National Vaccine Information Center, 21525 Ridgetop Circle, #100, Sterling, VA 20166*

*For more information visit: [NVIC.org](http://NVIC.org)*

*References: Constitution of Virginia, Centers for Disease Control, Virginia Department of Health, United Health Foundation, Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System, Health Resources Services Administration, The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986.*