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School Immunization Requirements

House Bill 19-1312, School Immunization Requirements, will require the Departments of Public Health and Environment to create a standard form and submission process for those seeking an exemption to immunizations due to a medical complication, religious, and personal beliefs. The Departments will be required to develop educational material regarding immunizations to be distributed to health care facilities. The new process and current immunization tracking system is to be presented at the SMART Act hearing. The new rules and regulations are to promulgate the medical exemption recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the Federal Department of Health. In addition, new regulations can be mandated, such as the time schools, parents, legal guardians, and students have to comply with the requirements. The bill intends to protect Colorado from preventable diseases by enacting new mandates required for students to opt out of vaccinations.

House Bill 19-1312 requires students to provide an up-to-date certificate of immunizations from a licensed physician before attending school, or written consent by their parent, guardian, or emancipated self requesting local health officials administer the vaccination. By providing the option to consent to a local health official administering the vaccination it provides an easy way for unvaccinated students to obtain the immunization; and will likely increase the number of students vaccinated.

Exemptions to the requirement of student vaccinations are limited to only those unable to receive the vaccination due to medical complication, or who have obtained a religious or

personal belief certificate.

The failure to vaccinate can lead to a multitude of negative non-pecuniary externalities, In regard to immunizations, failure to do so endangers children, risks infecting others, and can lead to the exclusion from school without proper documentation. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ranks Colorado last out of 49 states for vaccination rates for kindergarteners (Oravetz, 2019). Vaccination rates within Colorado schools vary vastly with reports of immunization rates of 50% or less, compared to others of 93-95% (Schimke, 2018). Due to the severe public health risk and excessive frequency of opting out of vaccinations, government intervention is warranted.

The current process to claim a non-medical exemption from vaccinations in Colorado parent, guardian, or emancipated self to be filed with the school (Oravetz, 2019). This is a very easy process. The forms can be downloaded from the Colorado State website and completed at home (Colorado.gov).

However, the proposed bill will make opting out of vaccinations more difficult. This will discourage individuals from avoiding vaccinations in order to avoid associated inconveniences. The process for obtaining an exemption will be more difficult if in-person signatures from the Public Health and Environmental Department, or their applicable county, district, or municipal health agency are required. These certificates for non-medical exemptions will also require yearly renewal. Each of these aspects will likely help reduce the number of students opting out.

The bill requires the Departments to develop educational material regarding

mumps, and rubella vaccines with predispositions to autism. However, due to inadequate methods, financial interests, ethical violations, and scientific misconduct, the study has been discredited and Wakefield's license has been revoked. Nonetheless, vaccination rates have



