



The Kentucky Academy of Science **opposes** HB 101, HB36, SB28, and SB37 which would impede full vaccination of Kentucky's population to defend against COVID-19.

We support educational institutions and other employers choosing to require vaccination for the protection of public health. Medical exceptions are already available for those with medical conditions.

Immunization using vaccines is a scientifically proven method to reduce the risk of occurrence and spread of disease in a population. The polio vaccine is one of the successful examples of vaccines that have kept children from acquiring this disease at a young age. Most vaccines are administered at a very young age to prevent diseases from harboring in children or young adults. Over the course of history, scientific research has improved vaccines to become effective in reducing diseases in a population with negligible side effects. This has proven effective in keeping infectious diseases under control, such as measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, hepatitis, and others. Public schools already require basic vaccinations for children to enter school because the scientific evidence is overwhelming that vaccines are safe and effective.

Educational institutions, as service providers, need to be able to require vaccinations if they judge it to benefit the health and welfare of their students and other stakeholders. Affected parties also include parents, patients, instructors, administrative and maintenance staff, and the surrounding community. Educational institutions, like any employer, create policies to safeguard their institutions and places of employment so that students can safely attend their institutions and interact with other students and participate in public activities. Considering that vaccines may not be a suitable option for someone with a medical condition, exemptions are provided for in existing laws and observed by these institutions.

Bills HB 101, HB36, SB28, and SB37 prohibit schools and other employers from safeguarding their institutions, staff, and stakeholders through a full vaccination program. Currently, with informed consent as well as disclosed procedures and risks, these institutions may screen for immunizations and provide or redirect their stakeholders to acquire the needed vaccination before participating at their institution.

Mandating vaccination by public and private schools or long-term care facilities is scientifically sound and an ethical decision to safeguard the health and welfare of students and their families.

Our Recommendations:

More educational and immunization awareness campaigns must be exercised to address doubts and concerns people have about vaccination. Educational materials can contain testimonials from medical professionals and of experiences from people who have embraced religion and science equally.



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