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Opponents to SB276 want to be heard by their legislators this summer

Sacramento – As the Legislature heads into a 4-week break, opponents to SB276 are ramping up their efforts to make sure their legislators know this bill will remove vaccine medical exemptions for vulnerable children, and put a state bureaucrat between their child and their doctor. The bill is slated to prevent doctors from allegedly “selling fake medical exemptions,” although to date none have been found guilty of doing so. Senator Richard Pan has repeatedly claimed this to be an urgent public health matter in light of the 11 cases of measles in children in California this year.

The Appropriations Committee hearing on July 11th, the last committee in which this bill will be heard was a bizarre display of the legislature trying to keep grassroots activists suppressed. In characteristic lock-step with other committee chairs, Assembly Member Lorena Gonzales, the head of Appropriations and coauthor of SB 276, became agitated as she presided over a hearing where the restless opposition vastly outnumbered support. Determined to enforce her session rules, she banged her gavel in response to the emotional testimonies of parents with medically vulnerable children, who would be forced to vaccinate and potentially harm their children if this bill passes, if they want to keep their children in school.

“When you poke the mama bear, you can expect a reaction,” said Christina Hildebrand, President of the non-profit A Voice for Choice Advocacy. “We work hard to build relationships with our representatives and educate them, but everyone has their limits when they feel they are being ignored, disrespected, and disenfranchised. Our representatives are supposed to provide leadership, not hurl insults and shut down testimony.”

“I don’t play,” Gonzales stated, cutting off the mic as angry outbursts erupted in the hearing room, “we have rules here.”

The contentious interaction has been fueled by the broken promises made during the passage of SB 277. During those deliberations in 2015, Gonzalez stated, “I believe in medical decisions. That’s why I think this bill (SB277) is a great way to address this. It allows so much flexibility for doctors, and for patients to have those discussions with their doctors, relying on scientific and medical fact, in order to come to a conclusion, relying on about what’s right for their children and their family.”

Scientific observation continues to evidence that a certain subset of the population is vulnerable to being damaged by vaccination. With the inability to pre-test for such vulnerability, parents and doctors continue to remind representatives of the importance of using caution, rather than blanket vaccinating children who are at higher risk of vaccine injury, resulting in lifelong health issues.

SB276 appears more and more to be a rhetoric-based about face, one that curtails the voice of the opposition in the people's house. It remains to be seen if legislators will respond logically to the education being offered to them by parents, medical professionals, organizations and lobbyists visiting the capitol and district offices and events this summer.

Senator Pan himself has often said the vaccine mandate opponents tend to be single issue voters. With so many close races anticipated in 2020, will legislators rise to their honorable stations of serving the people, or succumb to the pressures of party platforms and high-dollar CMA and Pharma lobbyists?

Press Contact: Christina Hildebrand,
A Voice for Choice Advocacy, Inc.
408.835.9353
christina@avoiceforchoice.org
WWW.AVOICEFORCHOICEADVOCACY.ORG
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/avoiceforchoice>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/avoiceforchoic>