

February 12, 2025

Honorable Chairman Wayne MacDonald  
House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 201  
33 North State Street  
Concord, NH 03301

**Testimony in opposition of HB 524 relative to the New Hampshire vaccine association.**

Dear Chairman MacDonald and Members of this Committee:

My name is Cathy Stratton and I am the CEO of the New Hampshire Medical Society. I'm representing the Medical Society on behalf of our nearly 2,000 physician members. We strongly oppose HB 524, the legislation that seeks to disband the New Hampshire Vaccine Association (NHVA).

The Medical Society's primary mission is to advocate for the well-being of our patients and promote public health. HB 524 poses a direct threat to both of these goals. The NHVA plays a critical role in safeguarding public health, particularly by increasing access to life-saving immunizations and reducing the financial burden on families and the state. We urge you to vote **Inexpedient to Legislate** (ITL) on this bill for the following reasons:

**1. The NHVA Increases Access to Vaccines for All Children**

The NHVA is an essential tool in removing barriers to immunization for New Hampshire children. It allows healthcare providers to administer vaccines to any child, regardless of their insurance status or family income. This ensures that all children have access to vaccines that prevent serious illnesses, hospitalization, and even death.

For example, the NHVA has been instrumental in ensuring the availability of vaccines that protect children against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a dangerous virus for infants and toddlers. Thanks to the NHVA's funding mechanism, New Hampshire physicians can offer this critical immunization to their patients, which would otherwise be inaccessible to many families. The NHVA's work and financial model are foundational in making childhood immunizations easy, equitable, and free of charge to families, saving lives and reducing unnecessary medical costs.

**2. The NHVA Saves the State Money and Increases Purchasing Power**

The NHVA's collective purchasing power allows New Hampshire to negotiate better rates for vaccines, saving taxpayers millions each year. The program helps to reduce vaccine costs by 30%, saving the state, insurers, providers, and patients approximately \$10 million annually, or about \$230 million over the life of the program. Without this

mechanism, New Hampshire would lose this vital cost savings, and the burden would shift to taxpayers and families, resulting in higher costs for everyone.

It's also important to note that the NHVA does not set vaccine policy or create vaccine laws for the state. Its sole purpose is to collect and distribute funding so that vaccines can be purchased and administered to children across the state. By disbanding the NHVA, New Hampshire would lose a vital, cost-effective system for ensuring that all children have access to life-saving vaccines, regardless of their financial or insurance status.

In conclusion, the New Hampshire Vaccine Association is a key component of our state's public health infrastructure. It increases access to vaccines, saves the state money, and, most importantly, protects the health and well-being of our children. The Medical Society strongly opposes HB 524 and urges the committee to vote **Inexpedient to Legislate**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this important issue. Should you have any further questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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