



**State of Connecticut**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell  
Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Public Health  
410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 340308  
Hartford, CT 06134

Dear Commissioner Coleman-Mitchell,

Please allow us to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the time and expertise you provided regarding vaccinations during the 2019 legislative session and for your willingness to provide some additional guidance and recommendations on this issue prior to the 2020 legislative session.

As you know, we are concerned that vaccination rates in certain Connecticut school districts and individual schools are trending at levels below what is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"). In some cases, the rates are 15%-30% below what is recommended by the CDC. The vaccination data your office provided this past May was a concrete illustration of this alarming trend, and we thank you and your staff for being available to the Legislature to explain this complex issue in relatable terms. However, we are in need of additional data and policy recommendations from your agency to help inform legislative decisions on this important topic going forward.

In May, the legislative leaders decided to forego any legislation on vaccinations until we had guidance and additional information from your agency on the following questions:

1. What additional statutory authority, if any, does the Department of Public Health need to (i) increase vaccinations rates in certain schools and (ii) to close schools in the case of an outbreak of certain diseases?
2. What approach should the State take to protect children who are currently enrolled or will enroll in schools who cannot be vaccinated due to medical conditions such as immune system disorders and/or risk of allergic reactions?
3. Should Connecticut remove the religious exemption from state law like Maine recently did and other states have done, or is there an alternative that will similarly increase vaccination rates in under-vaccinated schools and protect children who cannot be vaccinated?

Please allow this letter to serve as an official request to have these questions researched and answered. Our intention is to gather as much information as possible this summer and fall, so that we can move forward with thoughtful and medically prudent legislation next year. To that end, we look forward to a continued and productive dialogue on this matter.

Please feel free to contact our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,



Martin Looney  
Senate President Pro Tempore



Joseph Aresimowicz  
Speaker of the House



Bob Duff  
Senate Majority Leader



Matthew Ritter  
House Majority Leader