

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

HB 399

2023 Regular Session

Edmonston

Present law requires each person entering any school (licensed day care centers and elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools) for the first time to present satisfactory evidence of immunity to or immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases according to a schedule approved by the office of public health or to present evidence of an immunization program in progress. Exempts a student seeking to enter any such school or facility from this requirement if he submits a written statement from a doctor relative to medical contraindication or a written dissent.

Proposed law would have added the following relative to the exemption provided in present law:

- (1) Would have applied the exemption not only to students seeking to enter school but also to students attending school.
- (2) Would have required that any communication issued to students or their parents or guardians relative to immunization requirements include the text and legal citation of the present law exemption provision.
- (3) Would have exempted college students who only register for online courses.

(Proposed to amend R.S. 17:170(E) and (F); proposed to add R.S. 17:170(G))

VETO MESSAGE:

"Please be advised that I have vetoed House Bill 399 of the 2023 Regular Session.

Current state law provides for vaccine requirements for elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, proprietary schools, vocational schools, and licensed day care centers that are based on expert medical advice and schedules put together by the Louisiana Department of Health. Current law also provides for exceptions to those requirements when the student or his parent or guardian submits either a written statement from a physician stating that the procedure is contraindicated for medical reasons, or a written dissent from the student or his parent or guardian is presented.

House Bill 399 as passed the legislature is a covert attempt to undermine the faith of the public in vaccines. School vaccination requirements protect both students and school personnel in communities where potential for vaccine-preventable disease transmission is high. Perpetuating mistrust in vaccines that are safe, effective, and essential to public health is reckless and extremely dangerous. House Bill 399 will not become law.

For these reasons, I have vetoed the bill."