Dear Ms. Burke,

Please submit this to the Chair and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am stuck out of state with the recent snowstorm.

My name is Kristin Charlson, and I am a Minnesota parent writing with concerns about SF3439 and its removal of Minnesota's conscientious exemption for the MMR vaccine requirement.

My concern is specifically for medically fragile children like my son, Connor. Connor has a history of severe anaphylactic food allergies. By age five he had been diagnosed with approximately 50 food allergies, along with multiple environmental allergies. Managing his health has required ongoing medical care and careful decision-making with his physicians.

Children with complex medical histories often fall into a gray area where their health circumstances are serious, but they do not meet the extremely narrow list of CDC vaccine contraindications. For the MMR vaccine, those contraindications generally include only severe allergic reaction to a prior dose or vaccine component, severe immunocompromise, or pregnancy.

Because these criteria are so limited, many medically complex children do not qualify for a medical exemption even when parents and physicians believe caution is warranted. In practice, many physicians are reluctant to sign medical exemptions outside these strict criteria because they are closely tied to CDC guidance and professional standards.

For families like mine, relying only on medical exemptions does not provide meaningful protection. Removing Minnesota's conscientious exemption would leave parents of medically fragile children with no realistic option to make individualized decisions for their child's health.

In addition, some Minnesota families have sincere religious objections related to the development of the rubella component of the MMR vaccine using historic human fetal cell lines originally derived from abortions in the 1960s. While the vaccine itself does not contain fetal tissue, this remains a serious conscience concern for many Minnesotans. Eliminating the conscientious exemption forces families to violate deeply held beliefs and raises important concerns about the protection of religious freedom and freedom of conscience.

Minnesota has long balanced public health goals with respect for parental judgment, medical complexity, and freedom of conscience. Many Minnesotans also believe strongly

in bodily autonomy and the right to make individualized medical decisions for themselves and their children, particularly when a child has complex medical needs.

I respectfully ask that SF3439 be amended to preserve Minnesota's conscientious exemption for the MMR vaccine requirement so families like mine can continue to make careful medical decisions for our children.

Policies meant to protect children should not unintentionally place medically fragile children at greater risk.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Charlson

Woodbury, Minnesota