Testimony on Religious Freedom and Conscientious Exemptions

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We have meetings with SSI and doctors appointments for a disabled child that could not be rescheduled on such short notice.

For our family, abstaining from certain vaccines and medical products is not a casual preference or political position. It is a deeply held religious conviction formed through prayer, study, and careful research.

Our journey toward this conviction began in a deeply personal way. After our youngest son received his 16-month vaccinations, he experienced seizures in our arms.

That moment changed everything for our family. In the months and years that followed, we began researching, praying, and seeking to understand both the medical and ethical questions surrounding vaccines and their development.

Through that process, we came to believe that we could not participate in certain vaccines because of their connection to aborted fetal tissue.

Our faith teaches us that human life is sacred from the moment it is created in the womb.

Scripture reminds us:

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb… Your eyes saw my unformed body.” Psalm 139:13–16

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.” Jeremiah 1:5

Because of this belief, we cannot in good conscience participate in or benefit from medical products that were developed using tissue derived from aborted children.

Several components of the MMR were developed using fetal cell lines originating from aborted babies, including:

WI-38, developed in 1964 from lung tissue of a 3-month-gestation baby girl.
RA273, the rubella virus strain isolated from aborted fetal tissue and later cultivated using WI-38 cells to produce the rubella component of the MMR vaccine.
MRC-5, developed in 1970 from the lung tissue of a 14-week-gestation baby boy.
Research behind the rubella vaccine involved dozens of aborted babies in attempts to isolate the virus strain that is still used today.

Even more concerning for many pro-life families is that this practice has not remained confined to the past. New fetal cell lines continue to be developed, such as WALVAX-2, derived from lung tissue of a more recently aborted three-month-gestation baby girl.

For families like ours, this raises profound moral concerns.

Proverbs 31:8 calls us to “speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.” Our faith compels us to take that seriously.

In addition to these ethical concerns, we also hold a religious conviction that the immune system is a complex system created by God. After prayerful consideration and research, we do not believe it is our place to artificially alter that system through medical interventions that conflict with our faith and conscience.

These beliefs are sincere, deeply rooted, and central to our religious practice.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution protects the free exercise of religion. For many families, religious and conscientious exemptions are the only mechanism that allows them to live in accordance with those protections.

Our family is also already a homeschool family. Under Minnesota law, homeschool reporting statutes require families to comply with the same immunization statute that governs schools. Because of this, removing or restricting exemptions would not only affect children in public or private schools - it would also remove the only legal pathway for homeschool families like ours to remain compliant with state law while following our religious convictions.

Removing or restricting these exemptions does not change our convictions. It only places families like ours in an impossible position: choosing between participating fully in society and complying with Minnesota law, or remaining faithful to our deeply held religious beliefs.

Minnesota has long recognized the importance of protecting both public health and constitutional liberties. Preserving religious and conscientious exemptions respects that balance and ensures that families of faith can continue to live according to their deeply held convictions.

Please see attached documentation of ingredients. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gallagher Family
Buffalo, Minnesota

Attachment: Ingredient documentation image

MMR (MMR-II)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts, vitamins, amino acids, fetal bovine serum, sucrose, glutamate, recombinant human albumin, neomycin, sorbitol, hydrolyzed gelatin, sodium phosphate, sodium chloride
MMRV (ProQuad) (Frozen)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts MRC-5 cells, sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, sodium chloride, sorbitol, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, human albumin, sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride; potassium phosphate dibasic, neomycin, bovine calf serum
MMRV (ProQuad) (Refrigerator Stable)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts, MRC-5 cells, sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, urea, sodium chloride, sorbitol, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate, recombinant human albumin, sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate potassium chloride, neomycin, bovine serum albumin

Children of God for Life

Updated: 7/17/2025 www.cogforlife.org *Copying Permissible

Children of God for Life is the pro-life worldwide leader in the campaign for ethical vaccines, medicines and consumer products that preserve the dignity of human life.

Abortion-Tainted Vaccines for US and Canada and Ethical Alternatives

If the vaccine you are questioning is not listed, then to our knowledge it is not abortion-tainted.

DISEASE	PRODUCT NAME	MANUFACTURER	FETAL CELL LINE	*ETHICAL ALTERNATIVE*	MANUFACTURER	CELL LINE
ACUTE RESPIRATORY	Adenovirus 4, 7 Oral	Barr Labs	WI-38, HEK-293	None	NA	NA
CHICKENPOX	All Varivax, Varilrix	Merck, GSK	WI-38, MRC-5	None	NA	NA
COVID-19	See here.	Moderna, Pfizer, J&J, AstraZeneca	HEK-293, PER.C6	None	NA	NA
EBOLA	Advac, VSV-EBOV	J&J/Cruc, BioProt	HEK-293, PER.C6	Ervebo (rVSV-ZEBOV) 2-2020	Merck	Vero
HEPATITIS A	Vaqta, Havrix, Avaxim, Epaxal	Merck, GSK, Sanofi, Berna	MRC-5	Aimmugen (None in US or Canada)	Kaketsuken (Japan Only)	Vero
HEPATITIS A&B, HEPATITIS A&TYPHOID	Twinrix, Vivaxim	GSK, Sanofi	MRC-5	Engerix Hep-B Only, Recombivax Hep-B, TyphimVi	GSK, Merck, Sanofi	Yeast
INFECTION PREVENTION	G-CSF	Octapharma	HEK-293	Neupogen, Zarxio	Amgen, Sandoz	E-coli
MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA	MMR, Priorix	Merck, GSK	RA273, WI-38, MRC-5	MR+M (Japan Only)	Mitsubishi, Kitasato	Egg, Rabbit
MEASLES-RUBELLA	NR Vax, Eolarix	Merck, GSK	RA273, WI-38, MRC-5	Attenuvax (Measles Only)* AIK-C+R, Tanabe (Japan)	Merck, Kitasato, Mitsubishi	Egg, Rabbit
MUMPS-RUBELLA	Biavax II	Merck	RA273, WI-38	Mumpsvax (Mumps Only)*	Merck	Egg
RSV	Arexvy, Abryvso,mResvia	GSK, Pfizer,Moderna	HEK-293,Expi293F	Beyfortus (monoclonal antibody)	Sanofi Pasteur	Hep-2
RUBELLA	Meruvax II	Merck	RA273, WI-38	Matsuura, Takahashi (Japan)	Mitsubishi, Kitasato	Egg, Rabbit
MMR+CHICKENPOX	ProQuad/MMR-V, Priorix Tetra	Merck, GSK	RA273, WI-38, MRC-5	None	NA	NA
RABIES	Imovax	Sanofi	MRC-5	RabAvert	GSK	Egg
SHINGLES	Zostavax	Merck	WI-38, MRC-5	Shingrix	GSK	Hamster
SMALLPOX	Acambis 1000	Acambis	MRC-5	ACAM2000, MVA3000	Acambix, Baxter	Vero

Note: Immune Globulin shots will provide temporary immunity (4-6 months) for Hepatitis-A and Rubella (3-4 months).

***Ethically produced separate doses of measles and mumps vaccines are unavailable. Merck stopped providing them.**

Vaccine Excipient & Media Summary

Excipients Included in U.S. Vaccines, by Vaccine

In addition to weakened or killed disease antigens (viruses or bacteria), vaccines contain very small amounts of other ingredients – excipients or media.

Some excipients are added to a vaccine for a specific purpose. These include:
Preservatives, to prevent contamination. For example, thimerosal.
Adjuvants, to help stimulate a stronger immune response. For example, aluminum salts.
Stabilizers, to keep the vaccine potent during transportation and storage. For example, sugars or gelatin.

Others are residual trace amounts of materials that were used during the manufacturing process and removed. These include:
Cell culture materials, used to grow the vaccine antigens. For example, egg protein, various culture media.
Inactivating ingredients, used to kill viruses or inactivate toxins. For example, formaldehyde.
Antibiotics, used to prevent contamination by bacteria. For example, neomycin.

The following table lists all components, other than antigens, shown in the manufacturers' package insert (PI) for each vaccine. Each of these PIs, which can be found on the FDA's website (see below) contains a description of that vaccine's manufacturing process, including the amount and purpose of each substance. In most PIs, this information is found in Section 11: "Description."

All information was extracted from manufacturers' package inserts, current as of January 6, 2017.
If in doubt about whether a PI has been updated since then, check the FDA's website at:
http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines/ApprovedProducts/ucm093833.htm

Vaccine	Contains
Adenovirus	human-diploid fibroblast cell cultures (strain WI-38), Dulbecco's Modified Eagle's Medium, fetal bovine serum, sodium bicarbonate, monosodium glutamate, sucrose, D-mannose, D-fructose, dextrose, human serum albumin, potassium phosphate, plasdone C, anhydrous lactose, microcrystalline cellulose, polacrilin potassium, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, magnesium stearate, cellulose acetate phthalate, alcohol, acetone, castor oil, FD&C Yellow #6 aluminum lake dye
Anthrax (Biothrax)	amino acids, vitamins, inorganic salts, sugars, aluminum hydroxide, sodium chloride, benzethonium chloride, formaldehyde
BCG (Tice)	glycerin, asparagine, citric acid, potassium phosphate, magnesium sulfate, iron ammonium citrate, lactose
Cholera (Vaxchora)	casamino acids, yeast extract, mineral salts, anti-foaming agent, ascorbic acid, hydrolyzed casein, sodium chloride, sucrose, dried lactose, sodium bicarbonate, sodium carbonate
DT (Sanofi)	aluminum phosphate, isotonic sodium chloride, formaldehyde, casein, cystine, maltose, uracil, inorganic salts, vitamins, dextrose
DTaP (Daptacel)	aluminum phosphate, formaldehyde, glutaraldehyde, 2-phenoxyethanol, Stainer-Scholte medium, casamino acids, dimethyl-beta-cyclodextrin, Mueller's growth medium, ammonium sulfate, modified Mueller-Miller casamino acid medium without beef heart infusion, 2-phenoxyethanol
DTaP (Infanrix)	Fenton medium containing a bovine extract, modified Latham medium derived from bovine casein, formaldehyde, modified Stainer-Scholte liquid medium, glutaraldehyde, aluminum hydroxide, sodium chloride, polysorbate 80 (Tween 80)
DTaP-IPV (Kinrix)	Fenton medium containing a bovine extract, modified Latham medium derived from bovine casein, formaldehyde, modified Stainer-Scholte liquid medium, glutaraldehyde, aluminum hydroxide, VERO cells, a continuous line of monkey kidney cells, Calf serum, lactalbumin hydrolysate, sodium chloride, polysorbate 80 (Tween 80), neomycin sulfate, polymyxin B
DTaP-IPV (Quadracel)	modified Mueller's growth medium, ammonium sulfate, modified Mueller-Miller casamino acid medium without beef heart infusion, formaldehyde, ammonium sulfate aluminum phosphate, Stainer-Scholte medium, casamino acids, dimethyl-beta-cyclodextrin, MRC-5 cells, normal human diploid cells, CMRL 1969 medium supplemented with calf serum, Medium 199 without calf serum, 2-phenoxyethanol, polysorbate 80, glutaraldehyde, neomycin, polymyxin B sulfate

Vaccine	Contains
DTaP-HepB-IPV (Pediarix)	Fenton medium containing a bovine extract, modified Latham medium derived from bovine casein, formaldehyde, modified Stainer-Scholte liquid medium, VERO cells, a continuous line of monkey kidney cells, calf serum and lactalbumin hydrolysate, aluminum hydroxide, aluminum phosphate, aluminum salts, sodium chloride, polysorbate 80 (Tween 80), neomycin sulfate, polymyxin B, yeast protein.
DTaP-IPV/Hib (Pentacel)	aluminum phosphate, polysorbate 80, sucrose, formaldehyde, glutaraldehyde, bovine serum albumin, 2-phenoxyethanol, neomycin, polymyxin B sulfate, modified Mueller's growth medium, ammonium sulfate, modified Mueller-Miller casamino acid medium without beef heart infusion, Stainer-Scholte medium, casamino acids, dimethyl-beta-cyclodextrin. glutaraldehyde, MRC-5 cells (a line of normal human diploid cells), CMRL 1969 medium supplemented with calf serum, Medium 199 without calf serum, modified Mueller and Miller medium
Hib (ActHIB)	sodium chloride, modified Mueller and Miller medium (the culture medium contains milk-derived raw materials [casein derivatives]), formaldehyde, sucrose
Hib (Hiberix)	saline, synthetic medium, formaldehyde, sodium chloride, lactose
Hib (PedvaxHIB)	complex fermentation media, amorphous aluminum hydroxyphosphate sulfate, sodium chloride
Hib/Mening. CY (MenHibrix)	saline, semi-synthetic media, formaldehyde, sucrose, tris (trometamol)-HCl
Hep A (Havrix)	MRC-5 human diploid cells, formalin, aluminum hydroxide, amino acid supplement, phosphate-buffered saline solution, polysorbate 20, neomycin sulfate, aminoglycoside antibiotic
Hep A (Vaqta)	MRC-5 diploid fibroblasts, amorphous aluminum hydroxyphosphate sulfate, non-viral protein, DNA, bovine albumin, formaldehyde, neomycin, sodium borate, sodium chloride
Hep B (Engerix-B)	aluminum hydroxide, yeast protein, sodium chloride, disodium phosphate dihydrate, sodium dihydrogen phosphate dihydrate
Hep B (Recombivax)	soy peptone, dextrose, amino acids, mineral salts, phosphate buffer, formaldehyde, potassium aluminum sulfate, amorphous aluminum hydroxyphosphate sulfate, yeast protein
Hep A/Hep B (Twinrix)	MRC-5 human diploid cells, formalin, aluminum phosphate, aluminum hydroxide, amino acids, sodium chloride, phosphate buffer, polysorbate 20, neomycin sulfate, yeast protein
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (Gardasil)	vitamins, amino acids, mineral salts, carbohydrates, amorphous aluminum hydroxyphosphate sulfate, sodium chloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium borate, yeast protein
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (Gardasil 9)	vitamins, amino acids, mineral salts, carbohydrates, amorphous aluminum hydroxyphosphate sulfate, sodium chloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium borate, yeast protein
Influenza (Afluria) Trivalent & Quadrivalent	sodium chloride, monobasic sodium phosphate, dibasic sodium phosphate, monobasic potassium phosphate, potassium chloride, calcium chloride, sodium taurodeoxycholate, ovalbumin, sucrose, neomycin sulfate, polymyxin B, beta-propiolactone, thimerosal (multi-dose vials)
Influenza (Fluad)	squalene, polysorbate 80, sorbitan trioleate, sodium citrate dehydrate, citric acid monohydrate, neomycin, kanamycin, barium, egg proteins, CTAB (cetyltrimethylammonium bromide), formaldehyde
Influenza (Fluarix) Trivalent & Quadrivalent	octoxynol-10 (TRITON X-100), α-tocopheryl hydrogen succinate, polysorbate 80 (Tween 80), hydrocortisone, gentamicin sulfate, ovalbumin, formaldehyde, sodium deoxycholate, sodium phosphate-buffered isotonic sodium chloride
Influenza (Flublok) Trivalent & Quadrivalent	sodium chloride, monobasic sodium phosphate, dibasic sodium phosphate, polysorbate 20 (Tween 20), baculovirus and *Spodoptera frugiperda* cell proteins, baculovirus and cellular DNA, Triton X-100, lipids, vitamins, amino acids, mineral salts
Influenza (Flucelvax) Trivalent & Quadrivalent	Madin Darby Canine Kidney (MDCK) cell protein, protein other than HA, MDCK cell DNA, polysorbate 80, cetyltrimethlyammonium bromide, and β-propiolactone
Influenza (Flulaval) Trivalent & Quadrivalent	ovalbumin, formaldehyde, sodium deoxycholate, α-tocopheryl hydrogen succinate, polysorbate 80, thimerosal (multi-dose vials)
Influenza (Fluvirin)	ovalbumin, polymyxin, neomycin, betapropiolactone, nonylphenol ethoxylate, thimerosal
Influenza (Fluzone) Quadrivalent	egg protein, octylphenol ethoxylate (Triton X-100), sodium phosphate-buffered isotonic sodium chloride solution, thimerosal (multi-dose vials), sucrose

Vaccine	Contains
Influenza (Fluzone) High Dose	egg protein, octylphenol ethoxylate (Triton X-100), sodium phosphate-buffered isotonic sodium chloride solution, formaldehyde, sucrose
Influenza (Fluzone) Intradermal	egg protein, octylphenol ethoxylate (Triton X-100), sodium phosphate-buffered isotonic sodium chloride solution, sucrose
Influenza (FluMist) Quadrivalent	monosodium glutamate, hydrolyzed porcine gelatin, arginine, sucrose, dibasic potassium phosphate, monobasic potassium phosphate, ovalbumin, gentamicin sulfate, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA)
Japanese Encephalitis (Ixiaro)	aluminum hydroxide, protamine sulfate, formaldehyde, bovine serum albumin, host cell DNA, sodium metabisulphite, host cell protein
Meningococcal (MenACWY-Menactra)	Watson Scherp media containing casamino acid, modified culture medium containing hydrolyzed casein, ammonium sulfate, sodium phosphate, formaldehyde, sodium chloride
Meningococcal (MenACWY-Menveo)	formaldehyde, amino acids, yeast extract, Franz complete medium, CY medium
Meningococcal (MPSV4-Menomune)	Mueller Hinton casein agar, Watson Scherp casamino acid media, thimerosal (multi-dose vials), lactose
Meningococcal (MenB – Bexsero)	aluminum hydroxide, *E. coli*, histidine, sucrose, deoxycholate, kanamycin
Meningococcal (MenB – Trumenba)	defined fermentation growth media, polysorbate 80, histidine buffered saline.
MMR (MMR-II)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts, vitamins, amino acids, fetal bovine serum, sucrose, glutamate, recombinant human albumin, neomycin, sorbitol, hydrolyzed gelatin, sodium phosphate, sodium chloride
MMRV (ProQuad) (Frozen)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts MRC-5 cells, sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, sodium chloride, sorbitol, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, human albumin, sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride; potassium phosphate dibasic, neomycin, bovine calf serum
MMRV (ProQuad) (Refrigerator Stable)	chick embryo cell culture, WI-38 human diploid lung fibroblasts, MRC-5 cells, sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, urea, sodium chloride, sorbitol, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate, recombinant human albumin, sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate potassium chloride, neomycin, bovine serum albumin
Pneumococcal (PCV13 – Prevnar 13)	soy peptone broth, casamino acids and yeast extract-based medium, CRM197 carrier protein, polysorbate 80, succinate buffer, aluminum phosphate
Pneumococcal (PPSV-23 – Pneumovax)	phenol
Polio (IPV – Ipol)	Eagle MEM modified medium, calf bovine serum, M-199 without calf bovine serum, vero cells (a continuous line of monkey kidney cells), phenoxyethanol, formaldehyde, neomycin, streptomycin, polymyxin B
Rabies (Imovax)	human albumin, neomycin sulfate, phenol red indicator, MRC-5 human diploid cells, beta-propriolactone
Rabies (RabAvert)	chicken fibroblasts, β-propiolactone, polygeline (processed bovine gelatin), human serum albumin, bovine serum, potassium glutamate, sodium EDTA, ovalbumin neomycin, chlortetracycline, amphotericin B
Rotavirus (RotaTeq)	sucrose, sodium citrate, sodium phosphate monobasic monohydrate, sodium hydroxide, polysorbate 80, cell culture media, fetal bovine serum, vero cells *[DNA from porcine circoviruses (PCV) 1 and 2 has been detected in RotaTeq. PCV-1 and PCV-2 are not known to cause disease in humans.]*
Rotavirus (Rotarix)	amino acids, dextran, Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (sodium chloride, potassium chloride, magnesium sulfate, ferric (III) nitrate, sodium phosphate, sodium pyruvate, D-glucose, concentrated vitamin solution, L-cystine, L-tyrosine, amino acids solution, L-250 glutamine, calcium chloride, sodium hydrogenocarbonate, and phenol red), sorbitol, sucrose, calcium carbonate, sterile water, xanthan *[Porcine circovirus type 1 (PCV-1) is present in Rotarix. PCV-1 is not known to cause disease in humans.]*
Smallpox (Vaccinia – ACAM2000)	African Green Monkey kidney (Vero) cells, HEPES, human serum albumin, sodium chloride, neomycin, polymyxin B, Glycerin, phenol

Vaccine	Contains
Td (Tenivac)	aluminum phosphate, formaldehyde, modified Mueller-Miller casamino acid medium without beef heart infusion, ammonium sulfate
Td (Mass Biologics)	aluminum phosphate, formaldehyde, thimerosal, modified Mueller's media which contains bovine extracts, ammonium sulfate
Tdap (Adacel)	aluminum phosphate, formaldehyde, 2-phenoxyethanol, Stainer-Scholte medium, casamino acids, dimethyl-beta-cyclodextrin, glutaraldehyde, modified Mueller-Miller casamino acid medium without beef heart infusion, ammonium sulfate, modified Mueller's growth medium
Tdap (Boostrix)	modified Latham medium derived from bovine casein, Fenton medium containing a bovine extract, formaldehyde, modified Stainer-Scholte liquid medium, glutaraldehyde, aluminum hydroxide, sodium chloride, polysorbate 80
Typhoid (inactivated – Typhim Vi)	hexadecyltrimethylammonium bromide, formaldehyde, phenol, polydimethylsiloxane, disodium phosphate, monosodium phosphate, semi-synthetic medium
Typhoid (Vivotif Ty21a)	yeast extract, casein, dextrose, galactose, sucrose, ascorbic acid, amino acids, lactose, magnesium stearate. gelatin
Varicella (Varivax) *Frozen*	human embryonic lung cell cultures, guinea pig cell cultures, human diploid cell cultures (WI-38), human diploid cell cultures (MRC-5), sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, sodium chloride, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride, EDTA (Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid), neomycin, fetal bovine serum
Varicella (Varivax) *Refrigerator Stable*	human embryonic lung cell cultures, guinea pig cell cultures, human diploid cell cultures (WI-38), human diploid cell cultures (MRC-5), sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, urea, sodium chloride, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride, neomycin, bovine calf serum
Yellow Fever (YF-Vax)	sorbitol, gelatin, sodium chloride, egg protein
Zoster (Shingles – Zostavax) *Frozen*	sucrose, hydrolyzed porcine gelatin, sodium chloride, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride; MRC-5 cells, neomycin, bovine calf serum
Zoster (Shingles – Zostavax) *Refrigerator Stable*	sucrose, hydrolyzed porcine gelatin, urea, sodium chloride, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride, MRC-5 cells, neomycin, bovine calf serum

A table listing vaccine excipients and media *by excipient* can be found in:

Grabenstein JD. *ImmunoFacts: Vaccines and Immunologic Drugs* – 2013 (38th revision). St Louis, MO: Wolters Kluwer Health, 2012.