



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Skoufis

## Skoufis Helps Pass Bill to End Religious Exemption for Vaccines

JAMES SKOUFIS June 13, 2019

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**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

### SKOUFIS HELPS PASS BILL TO END RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS FOR VACCINES

A bill co-sponsored by Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) to end the religious exemption for vaccine requirements for children (S.2994-A) has passed the state Senate.

New York's current law allows children to avoid vaccinations if they contradict the "genuine and sincere religious beliefs" of the child's parent or guardian. The new bill that passed the Senate, S.2994-A, repeals all non-medical exemptions from vaccination requirements for children.

"The clock is ticking, outbreaks are rising, and here in the state Senate, we are doing something about it," **said Senator Skoufis**. "Vaccines save lives, and unless there is a legitimate medical reason why someone can't be vaccinated, immunizations ought to be required if that individual wants to be in public spaces. I'm proud that we took this step today and followed the scientific consensus to ensure the public's health is protected."

"This is a great step forward in protecting the public health here in New York. This law should lead to a substantial increase in vaccination rates and to improved protection of our most vulnerable residents; infants, the immunocompromised and those who have legitimate medical issues. I thank Senator Skoufis and our other local state representatives for understanding the importance of this legislation and working to see it passed," **said Rockland County Executive Ed Day**.

"For the past eight months, I have led the Rockland measles outbreak response and witnessed the effects on our community including multiple hospitalizations including ICU admissions and even a premature birth caused by this disease. Ending non-medical exemptions to vaccination will lead to significantly improved health outcomes for our residents and for everyone across New York State. This bill will make a world of difference for those who need it the most," **said Rockland Commissioner of Health Dr. Patricia Schnabel Ruppert**.

Skoufis urged the Governor to immediately sign this important legislation.

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