



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## HPV Prevention Legislation (S4779-A/A6702-C)

RUBEN DIAZ June 5, 2009

The growing rate of infection for the human papillomavirus (HPV) in young girls is indeed alarming. While the HPV vaccine may be effective in preventing infection in a number of cases, the methods that our State uses to encourage distribution of this vaccine must be closely monitored. Presently, Senator Krueger and Assemblymember Paulin are sponsoring legislation (S.4779-A/A.6702-C) **that would allow minor children under the age of 18 to receive the HPV vaccine without parental consent.** While I commend Senator Krueger and Assemblymember Paulin for their efforts to prevent HPV infection, minor children are not able to make medical decisions for themselves. I am not prepared to make parents irrelevant in matters of healthcare decisions involving their daughters. While HPV infection and the threat of cervical cancer are reasons for concern, parents should not be removed from such decisions.

In contrast to S.4779A /A.6702C, **Assemblyman Benjamin and I offer legislation (S.1983/ A.3203)** that encourages voluntary, informed vaccination against HPV for school-aged girls and their parents or guardians. Our measure encourages parents and guardians of children in New York State, **through the provision of written educational materials and medical consultation, to decide** if their child should receive the HPV vaccine. Parents should be actively included in their child's health through informed and educated decisions.

Until recently, no other vaccine has been pushed so quickly to be available for use in children. No other vaccine has had a shorter period of FDA review. No commonly administered vaccine is more expensive. Many parents are suspicious of vaccines due to concerns that autism may be related to the cocktail of vaccines given to young children. Informed and involved parental consent is vital because the HPV vaccine has several harmful side effects including: allergic reactions, involving difficult breathing, wheezing, skin rash, itching or hives; plus diarrhea, nausea, pain at the injection site, fever, fainting, dizziness, swollen glands and joint pain.

We need to more closely examine Senate bills that reduce parental responsibility or involvement with decision-making. Families and parents have important roles to play in the lives of their children. We should encourage and support parents, not abet children in evading involvement with their parents.

**I hope you will join me in opposing Krueger/Paulin HPV legislation.**