



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## As New York Faces Worst Measles Outbreak in Decades, Hoylman, Dinowitz, Carlucci, Childhood Cancer Survivors, and Transplant Recipients Urge End to Non-Medical Exemptions for Vaccination

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 28, 2019



NEW YORK, NY – Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WF-Manhattan), Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz, Senator David Carlucci, kids with cancer and who’ve survived cancer, and transplant recipients threatened by the ongoing measles epidemic held a press conference to urge the legislature to pass Senator Hoylman’s and Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz’s legislation ([S2994/A2371](#)) to end the non-medical exemption for vaccinations in New York. The measure is currently awaiting votes in both houses of the State Legislature.

**Senator Brad Hoylman said:** "With over 840 confirmed cases, New York is facing a state of emergency with its worst measles outbreak in four decades. Elected officials in California acted decisively and repealed all non-medical exemptions to vaccination requirements under their state law after suffering an outbreak at Disneyland in 2014 that resulted in at least 131 cases of measles. New York is currently facing more than six times the number of cases that spurred California to action. Our state's inaction, in the face of such an overwhelming public health emergency, is appalling.

Kids who are fighting cancer and other serious illnesses that compromise their immune system have a right to go to school. We need to stop thinking about this as a philosophical debate, and remember that vaccination is a life-or-death issue for immunocompromised children. Every second we wait to pass the legislation I carry with Assemblymember Dinowitz poses another grave risk to the health and safety of New Yorkers like Teela Wyman and King Singh. For their sake, we cannot afford to wait."

**Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz said:** "One of the most common (and most dangerous) arguments presented by anti-vaxxers is that somehow the disease is more safe than the vaccine. For those who are too young to be vaccinated or who have survived childhood cancer, organ transplants, or any number of other medical issues that compromise an immune system - there can be no doubt that this argument is false. It is absolutely imperative that everyone who is medically able to get vaccinated does so in order to protect those who cannot get vaccinated for medical reasons. My bill with State Senator Hoylman will protect immuno-compromised children who have the right to attend school without fearing for their health."

**Senator David Carlucci said:** "Through no fault of their own, people battling cancer or who have gotten a transplant are put at risk because a group of people has decided their ideological beliefs are more important than public health. Putting people in harms way who

are now receiving life-saving treatment is selfish and misguided. Vaccines save lives and with the current measles outbreaks, legislation to end non-medical exemptions is paramount.”

**Nancy Goodman, founder of Kids v Cancer said:** “I urge Governor Cuomo to support this important bill.”

After California repealed their non-medical exemptions, their vaccination rates improved demonstrably, particularly in schools with the lowest rates of compliance. The percentage of kindergarten students in the 2017-18 school year with all their required vaccines was 95.1% - a 4.7 percentage point increase over 2014-15.

Current law requires children to receive vaccines for polio, mumps, measles, diphtheria, rubella, HiB, hepatitis B, and varicella. Senator Hoylman and Assemblymember Dinowitz’s legislation would repeal an exemption to this law that allows children to avoid vaccination on the grounds that they contradict the “genuine and sincere religious belief” of the child’s parents or guardians.

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