

2021 -- H 5443

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - OFFENSES PERTAINING TO SCHOOLS

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Lombardi, Noret, Fellela, Craven, and Williams

Date Introduced: February 10, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-38-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-38 entitled "Offenses
2 Pertaining to Schools [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is
3 hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **16-38-2. Immunization.**

5 (a) Every person upon entering any public or private school including any college or
6 university in this state as a pupil shall furnish to the administrative head of the school evidence that
7 the person has been immunized against any diseases that may from time to time be prescribed by
8 regulation of the director of health and tested for tuberculosis, or a certificate from a licensed
9 physician stating that the person is not a fit subject for immunization for medical reasons, or a
10 certificate signed by the pupil, if over eighteen (18) years of age, or by the parent or guardian stating
11 that immunization and/or testing for communicable diseases is contrary to that person's [personal,](#)
12 [philosophical, or](#) religious beliefs. It shall be the responsibility of the administrative head of the
13 school to secure compliance with these regulations.

14 (b) Every child more than twenty-four (24) months of age, resident in the state of Rhode
15 Island, shall be eligible to receive the immunization against meningococcal disease. The
16 Department of Health shall include meningococcal vaccine in the department's immunization
17 program, established by § 23-1-44.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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- 1 This act would provide an exception to required school immunizations for pupils whose
- 2 personal, philosophical, or religious beliefs are contrary to immunization and/or testing.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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