

IN THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE STATE OF OREGON

FOR THE COUNTY OF YAMHILL

SITTING FOR THE TRANSACTION OF COUNTY BUSINESS

In the Matter of a Statement in Support of)
Medical Freedom)

RESOLUTION 21-08-26-1

WHEREAS, medical and religious freedom are fundamental components of America’s foundational values. The United States Bill of Rights constrains government entities from violating these basic liberties. At the center is the First Amendment, which prevents the government from making laws which regulate an establishment of religion or that would prohibit the free exercise of religion; and

WHEREAS, the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits federal, state, and local governments from impermissibly burdening the free exercise of religion. The Free Exercise Clause requires government entities to refrain from disfavoring religious exercise and to treat religious exercise as favorably as comparable secular activities. The Constitution protects all those facing a vaccine mandate from a government entity; and

WHEREAS, the First Amendment prohibits governmental entities from refusing to provide religious exemptions when it provides medical exemptions. If the government already recognizes that it can achieve its public health goals while allowing medical exemptions, it can also achieve its public health goals while allowing religious exemptions as well; and

WHEREAS, employees of government entities have legal protections under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII prohibits employers, private and governmental, that employ 15 or more employees from engaging in discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of religion. Title VII protections apply to religious beliefs and practices even if those beliefs and practices are not recognized by any organized religion; and

WHEREAS, a government's determination of whether to grant a religious exemption should not depend upon the government’s perception of a particular religious belief. Religious beliefs need not be acceptable, logical, consistent, or comprehensible to others in order to merit First Amendment protection. The government must merely ascertain whether the person requesting a religious exemption holds an “honest conviction”. The First Amendment protects that person’s religious exercise with or without support from clergy; and

WHEREAS, employer freedom and individual freedom work hand in hand. We believe vaccine mandates without necessary exemptions violate the constitutional rights of all Oregonians. It is our expectation that all medical, philosophical and religious exemptions be upheld in accordance with the First Amendment.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Yamhill County Board of Commissioners supports Medical Freedom.

DONE this 26th day of August 2021.

YAMHILL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner, Chair MARY STARRETT

Commissioner, Vice-Chair LINDSAY BERSCHAUER

Voted "No"

Commissioner, CASEY KULLA



Accepted by Yamhill County
Board of Commissioners on
8/26/21 by Board Order
21-368