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Connecticut House Democrats pass repeal of religious exemption from vaccine mandates

The lower house of the Connecticut legislature voted 95 to 53 to early this morning to repeal their state's longstanding religious exemption from vaccine mandates to attend school. House Bill HB 6423 passed 90 to 53. The vote was overwhelmingly on party lines, 86 Democrats and four Republicans voted to repeal, seven Democrats voted with 46 Republicans to retain the exemption. Connecticut does not allow exemptions for non-religious reasons of conscience like 18 other states do. 8,000 students, which is about 2.5% of all students in Connecticut, have religious exemptions.

An amendment was added yesterday that grandfathers current K-12 students who have exemptions. Pre-school students were excluded which will inevitably create a situation where some children in the same family have exemptions and others do not.

Families that have not yet submitted applications for religious exemptions still can do so.

Only states with control by the Democratic party of both legislative houses and the Governor, like Maine, New York, and California, have repealed religious exemptions. Unlike those states, the Connecticut House Democrats did not even have the pretext of a measles outbreak to use as a cover to provide the vaccine industry with a long-sought policy goal.

The House debated the bill for 16 hours yesterday. And two themes we have seen in the other states that have repealed religious exemptions became abundantly clear. First, a large portion of Democrats expressed

overt hostility to religious belief and people of faith. Many Democrats seem to believe that the "first freedom" in the Bill of Rights, freedom of religion, only applies when religious belief does not conflict with their policy preferences.

Democrats claim to be the party of "science," but the debate showed that most Connecticut House members do not understand basic concepts of vaccine policy like "herd" or "community immunity." The prevailing belief is that unless vaccination rates are 100% for all vaccines for all students then herd immunity will not be achieved. A popular excuse provided for repealing the exemption was the need to provide protection for immune compromised students even though neither school staff, teachers or anyone else in society, at this point, are required to have shots, much less proof of immunity.

The next stop is the Connecticut State Senate. Reports have circulated that the Senate will vote on a bill that does not include grandfathering. If that happens the bill would have to be sent back to the House for a revote. If the House does not approve an amended bill then the bill would not move forward.

Democratic Governor Ned Lamont has repeatedly said he will sign the bill.

The current bill would take effect in September of 2022.