

בס"ד

שמואל קמנצקי  
Rabbi S. Kamenetsky

2018 Upland Way  
Philadelphia, PA 19131



Home: 215-473-2798  
Study: 215-473-1212

כ"ט תשרי תשע"ה

To Whom It May Concern

The Torah commands, (דברים ד, טו) ונשמרתם מאד לנפשותיכם. This Biblical commandment requires one to be very vigilant in caring for one's life, and to refrain from any action that may put his life or health in danger. The benefits and risks of vaccination is a much debated topic in medical and scientific circles. Although one may follow the opinion of most doctors and choose to vaccinate his children, the individual who has done his research has the obligation to act according to his knowledge. If his research has led him to understand that the risks of vaccination are greater than its benefits, and particularly when his view is supported by many medical doctors and researchers, the commandment of ונשמרתם מאד לנפשותיכם obligates him to shield his children from vaccines. This is even more so when a parent has reasons to believe that his children are sensitive to vaccines. To act otherwise would be a transgression of the above Biblical commandment.

Schools must honor the request for religious exemption from such parents, for it is entirely justified. Coercing parents to vaccinate against their will under the claim of protecting the public is a display of lack of בטחון, for the risk that the unvaccinated children are posing to the public is statistically so small that it is not the duty of a מאמץ ביה"ח to worry about it (see the letter of Rav Chaim Kanievsky Shlita)<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, anyone coercing someone to vaccinate against his better judgment becomes responsible before Hashem for any adverse reaction - big or small - that could result from it, חיי"ר.

העושה שלום במרומיו הוא יעשה שלום עלינו  
וישים בינינו אהבה ואחווה שלום ורחמי

*[Handwritten signature]*  
אשר  
קמנין  
אשר  
אשר

*[Handwritten signature]*  
אשר  
אשר  
אשר



<sup>1</sup> The medical establishment, too, is of the opinion that this risk is insignificant. This is the reason why schools are obligated by law to accept religious exemptions as long as there is no outbreak of preventable disease.