

In person testimony of Thomas Salt

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1 attachments (20 KB)

Testimony_11122021.pdf;

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Per request, in person testimony of Thomas Salt, Olathe, KS, is attached, containing suggested modification to include conscientious objection. Note the attached testimony does not contain the second recommendation I made in person to the committee, which is to modify the definition of "physician" to exclude the wording "and surgery", in order to allow medical exemptions signed by doctors of chiropractic to be covered by this legislation.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Best regards,
Thomas Salt

To God be the Glory

My name is Tom Salt from Olathe, Kansas. I face vaccine mandates as an engineer for a government contractor. Today I want to ask two things of the Kansas legislature. First, amend RS 2356 by adding a conscientious objection clause, which would provide protection for all Kansas workers to refuse a COVID vaccine for any reason without fear of job loss. Second, introduce and vote on a resolution in support of the attorney general's lawsuit against the federal contractor mandate.

While the current text of RS2356 is a great start to codifying workers' rights to opt out of COVID vaccines, it fails to address legitimate objections to COVID vaccines for reasons other than religious or medical. The easiest way to address this would be to add a conscientious objection clause to RS2356 thereby legally protecting a worker's right to object to a vaccine for any reason. The clause would look something like this: Following the paragraph on religious exemptions, paragraph (3) would read, "Or the employee submits a written waiver request to the employer stating that the employee has a conscientious objection to the requirement". A definition of conscientious objection would be added, something like this: "'conscientious objection' means any religious, philosophical, moral, ethical, or other belief against an employer's COVID-19 vaccine requirement".

I would like to present a few examples illustrating the need for a conscientious objection clause. I have a friend who works for a separate government contractor in the Kansas City area who has a wife and two kids. He couldn't afford to lose his job. He had serious reservations against getting the vaccine, but because he did not feel he had a compelling religious objection or ability to get a medical exemption, he ended up getting the vaccine rather than face termination. I also have a neighbor who works for the same government contractor, who also has serious reservations against getting the vaccine, but does not feel he has a compelling religious objection or ability to get a medical exemption. This neighbor has a wife and five kids depending on his income, so he feels defeated with no other option but to get vaccinated against his will.

People are objecting to COVID vaccines for many reasons which cannot all be encapsulated in a deeply held religious belief or medical history. For example, do you think that just maybe the fact that these vaccines utilize novel technology, were hastily developed, and have caused thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of serious negative health outcomes, just might make some people not want them? Or the fact that there is absolutely no long term safety data for them?

I hold here a roll of toilet paper. What if you were told that as a condition of employment you had to eat this roll of toilet paper? It might seem like an unusual and perhaps distasteful employment requirement, but it would not be an altogether dangerous or impossible one. In fact if you just soaked this roll in water for a while and put it through the blender, you could probably drink it right down. But who in our society would think it in any way appropriate for an employer to terminate you for not eating toilet paper? Who would think you need to demonstrate a conflicting religious belief or have a signed doctor's statement to opt out? I think we all intuitively know we have a right to decide what we eat or don't eat. But how is it if we can all clearly

understand our inalienable right to decide what to ingest, that we get so confused about our inalienable right to decide what we inject? Which would be the greater sin, coercing someone to eat cellulose, or coercing someone to be injected with an experimental gene therapy with an unknown but potentially fatal outcome? I urge this legislature to add a conscientious objection clause to RS2356 and protect every Kansan's inalienable right to refuse a vaccine for any reason.

Finally, I call on this legislature to introduce and take a roll call vote on a resolution in support of the attorney general's lawsuit against the federal contractor mandate. I want every legislator and the governor of this state to go on record on how they stand regarding this mandate. Lip service is not enough. Put it on record.

Thank you.