

March 6, 1979

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individuals of that particular religious group that I would support this amendment so in good faith I would have to reject your proposed amendment to the Koch amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Chamber, there are no other lights on. Did you want to close on your amendment to the amendment?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes. Members of the Legislature, I think the entire amendment that Senator Koch is offering is inappropriate. If it is a settled conviction of the state that a piece of legislation is going to be enacted whose aim is to protect the health and welfare of children, there should not be exceptions allowed. Either every child should be immunized or no child should be required to be immunized. If you are going to allow an exception, it should not have to be based on religion. It should be any objection and you should not restrict the person to membership in what they call an established church. This is the most invidious type of religious discrimination. I know this is the typical and traditional language which is employed in these obnoxious atrocious amendments, and, Senator Koch, those adjectives apply to the amendment not to you. That is the kind of language which is employed. But suppose I believe in sticks and stones, and I say sticks and stones don't get injections. They don't have to be immunized, therefore, my child was created by the same one who created the trees. So in the same way that artificial substances do not need to be injected into a piece of vegetation for it to be helpful, it will not be injected into my child but then you are going to come to me and say, do you belong to the Christian Science Church? I say I don't even believe in it. Ah ha, it doesn't apply to you. Then your child has to get immunized. Maybe I don't have any religious persuasion but I say if his or her child doesn't have to go under the needle, mine doesn't either and I don't want mine immunized because I don't believe the medication is adequately tested. I believe that it may cause a worse ailment in my child than the one it is to protect my child against but that is not a valid reason. It is not accepted as a reason, but if I come in there moaning and groaning and singing hymns and holding up a prayer book or bell, book and candle, then all you have to do is say, if you are the parent, I believe in this and I don't want my child immunized and there it goes. I think this is one of the most discriminatory unfair improper amendments that could be put in a bill of this nature, and if it is adopted, the entire bill ought to be killed. Either we are concerned about the welfare of children or we are not. We are not