



**County  
Health Officials  
of New York**

Leading the way to healthier communities

**SUPPORTS**

With Recommendations

### **S.6279A (Carlucci)**

#### **AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to requiring children enrolled in an overnight, children's non-regulated, summer day, or travelling camp to be vaccinated**

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) supports requiring children enrolled in an overnight, children's non-regulated, summer day, or travelling camp to be vaccinated in accordance to the recommendations by the New York State Department of Health.

Prior outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases at summer camps throughout the state have been attributed to unvaccinated campers or staff who attended the camps. Disease outbreaks continue to have a significant impact on the health of children, and result in substantial costs to parents, camps and local and state governments.

The ongoing measles outbreak is a source of great concern to public health officials, parents and camp operators as the summer camp season approaches. The ongoing transmission of measles by unvaccinated individuals has the potential to move the current outbreak to other communities throughout New York State, posing a risk to those who cannot, for medical reasons, be vaccinated, as well as hampering public health efforts to limit the spread of disease. The congregate camp settings increase the likelihood of exposure and transmission.

NYSACHO also strongly supports the provisions of the bill that allow for medical exemption only to the proposed vaccine requirements. Non-medical exemptions result in lower overall vaccination rates, which pose a threat to the health both children and adults who are medically unable to be vaccinated.

Camp counselors and staff are in contact with campers around the clock, and if unvaccinated, put campers at risk for contagious diseases. While many campers have been vaccinated under state school vaccination requirements, counselors from outside the state or country may not be vaccinated. Past camp outbreaks have been associated with imported cases by individuals from other countries or with a history of international travel. In 2005, there were 31 identified cases of mumps that were associated with a camp counselor who had traveled from the United Kingdom and had not been vaccinated for mumps. Immunization requirements for camp employees would prevent such outbreaks. NYSACHO therefore recommends that the bill be amended to also require vaccinations for camp employees.

For the reasons stated above, NYSACHO strongly supports this legislation, with the recommendation that immunization requirements for camp employees be enacted into law as well. We would further recommend that this act become effective immediately, to allow for immediate implementation of this important public health measure to prevent further spread of the ongoing measles outbreak.

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