



S.1618

THE COMMUNITY IMMUNITY ACT

Senator Becca Rausch

AT A GLANCE

The Community Immunity Act is a comprehensive legislative solution designed to strengthen our infectious disease prevention efforts and support vaccine access and utilization. The bill achieves this mission by facilitating robust data collection to assess gaps in statewide vaccine delivery, standardizing immunization and exemption policy and protocols for our schools and other youth programs, and supporting local interventions in communities lacking herd immunity to protect against the spread of dangerous yet preventable diseases.

PROBLEMS IN MASSACHUSETTS IMMUNIZATION INFRASTRUCTURE



MA does not have localized herd immunity to protect against the spread of infectious diseases in communities across the state.



The Department of Public Health (DPH) lacks comprehensive data on immunization rates in daycare centers, K-12 schools, summer camps, and colleges because data reporting is neither standardized nor mandatory.



Overburdened school and camp personnel are charged with processing vaccine exemptions, a process that should be managed and monitored by public health professionals.



There is no requirement to notify parents and guardians if immunization rates drop low enough at a school or program to put their children at increased risk of contracting disease.

COMMUNITY IMMUNITY ACT SOLUTIONS

SUPPORT STUDENT HEALTH

Create consistent immunization and exemption policy and protocols for all Massachusetts childcare centers, K-12 schools, colleges, and summer camps, with exemption processes to be managed and monitored by public health officials

IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH

Require regular immunization and exemption data reporting from youth programs to parents, caregivers, and DPH, and from DPH to the public

ENGAGE COMMUNITIES

Provide information pathways to parents, caregivers, and community members about programmatic immunization rates and vaccine safety, efficacy, and access, including state and local collaborative outreach to families when youth programs fall below protective herd immunity rates