

TESTIMONY for HB 359 (LaFonta)

(EDUCATION: "... to provide information to certain students relative to human papillomavirus (HPV) and immunization against it")

House Education Committee, April 22, 2008

(Prepared on site; not offered)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. W. A. Krotoski. I am an internist and medical researcher, now retired, holding both Ph.D. and M.P.H. (Master of Public Health degrees in addition to the M.D. I have lived in Louisiana for 34 years, and in the Baton Rouge area since 1981. Until retirement, my practice was mostly with the U.S. Public Health Service, but I also served on the faculties of LSU's and Tulane's Public Health and Medical Schools. I have authored or co-authored 54 research articles and a medical text, and have contributed to several others. Currently, I am President of *The Hippocratic Resource*, a Louisiana organization of life-respecting physicians, dentists, nurses, and other health professionals.

Arguably, testifying against motherhood, apple pie and a vaccine against cancer is folly, so I will not. Please keep the following in mind, however, as you evaluate Representative LaFonta's HB392, "... to provide information to certain students relative to human papillomavirus (HPV) and immunization against it":

1. This is a new vaccine for a long-term disease; its efficacy is not completely known for long-term use, and it is expensive (about \$400 a series).
2. HPV is not the only cause of cancer of the cervix; hormonal contraceptives cause cervical cancer at a rate double that for non-infected women, and even greater for HPV-infected women.
3. Informing children – or their parents – that there is a vaccine against cervical cancer, while not informing them that there is a measured and significant risk of getting it some other way, is questionably responsible. All it does is to produce a false sense of security.
4. I would urge the Committee to consider informing the children about, for example, the cervical cancer risk of hormonal contraception in addition.

Thank you for your attention!

(S/s)

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The Hippocratic Resource
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