Dear Josh,

I have been a Public Health Nurse at Steele County Public Health for ten years.  I serve many families who are behind on their immunizations because they do not have health insurance to cover the costs.  These are families who value the importance of prevention but do not have the money for the vaccines.  Immunizations can be very costly to a family and many people unfortunately need to make decisions like do I get this vaccine to prevent this disease, or do I buy groceries so my family can eat.  I have been blessed and have never had to make these types of decisions before.  Although, I do make many decisions about how to spend my money, I have never had to decide on which basic need I was going to choose today.

Since my time at Steele County Public Health, I have taken pride in building up a strong immunization program.  I have been breaking down barriers and families trust me for their vaccination needs.  I have never had to turn anyone away for not being able to offer what is recommended for them.  Unfortunately, over the past couple months, I have had to turn people away.  Just yesterday I had given a shingles vaccine to someone that it is recommended for but had to sadly explain that I could not provide his second dose.  I turn clients away for the Hepatitis B vaccination which is universally recommended due to the increase in cases and the expense of living with this chronic and potentially deadly disease.   It is very heartbreaking to think that I could not serve them and protect them.

Immunizations have been around for decades, and they work!  Research shows that immunizations help prevent and spread diseases often near 100%.   They are safe, effective and save money in the long run.  Please consider supporting the Un and Underinsured Vaccination Program in Minnesota.  Help prevent these preventable diseases and help protect our communities.  Thank you!

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