

Letter: Vaccine mandates are legal

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The argument made by anti-vaccination activists that forcing people to be vaccinated is unconstitutional is false. *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*, (1905), was a United States Supreme Court case in which the court upheld the authority of states to enforce compulsory vaccination laws.

The court's decision articulated the view that individual liberty is not absolute and is subject to the police power of the state. And that the Massachusetts law did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court held that "in every well ordered society charged with the duty of conserving the safety of its members the rights of the individual in respect of his liberty may at times, under the pressure of great dangers, be subjected to such restraint, to be enforced by reasonable regulations, as the safety of the general public may demand" and that "real liberty for all could not exist under the operation of a principle which recognizes the right of each individual person to use his own liberty, whether in respect of his person or his property, regardless of the injury that may be done to others."

The Supreme Court reaffirmed its decision in *Zucht v. King* (1922), which held that a school system could refuse admission to a student who failed to receive a required vaccination. In June of this year, a federal judge in Houston dismissed a lawsuit brought by 117 employees at Houston Methodist Hospital who were suing the hospital system over its COVID-19 vaccine requirement. U.S. District Judge Lynn Hughes upheld the hospital's vaccination policy, saying the requirement broke no federal law and was consistent with numerous court ruling going back to the 1905 Supreme Court decision. "This is not coercion," said Hughes.

"Methodist is trying to do their business of saving lives without giving them the COVID-19 virus. It is a choice made to keep staff, patients, and their families safer."

Proof of vaccination is growing every day and those that refuse will be excluded from a rapidly growing number of activities including employment, it's your choice.

Michael A. Sommer II, Ph.D.

Smith River