

Testimony of Michelle Cotterman, RN  
Support of HB 193  
Economic Development, Commerce, and Labor  
*September 12, 2017*

Good day Chairman Young, Vice Chair DeVitis, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the Commerce and Labor Committee. I am writing to you today to share my testimony in support of HB193.

My name is Michelle Cotterman and I am a registered nurse. As patients, we have the right to make voluntary decisions regarding medical risk-taking. We become patients when we accept medical procedures, whether it be for treatment or prevention. Right now in the state of Ohio existing employment policies discriminate against my peers for saying no to the annual flu shot. I have friends who have walked away from a career they love because their right to bodily integrity is more important to them than a paycheck. When did it become acceptable for corporations to make policies that mandate medical procedures? Should their policies extend into my skin?

Over the years the CDC has said that the flu vaccine is 10-60% effective at preventing medically attended influenza (1). That means flu vaccine reduces a person's risk of developing flu illness that results in a visit to the doctor's office or urgent care provider (2). The CDC asserts that "flu vaccination also may make your illness milder if you do get sick" (3). How would you reconcile this information that seems to indicate vaccinated workers who get the flu shot are more likely to transmit it because they do not know they are sick or are not sick enough to stay home? How do mandatory flu shot policies protect patients if vaccinated and unvaccinated employees are susceptible to infection?

*Individuals have the legal right to be fully and accurately informed about the benefits and risks of a medical intervention, including a pharmaceutical product, and be free to make a voluntary decision about whether to accept the risk for themselves without being coerced or punished for the decision they make.*

This is about freedom. As a person who values the freedom of bodily autonomy, I ask that you support HB193 and vote YES today.

Resources:

(1) *Interim Estimates of 2016–17 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness — United States, February 2017*

[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6606a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6606a3\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6606a3.htm?s_cid=mm6606a3_w)

(2) *Vaccine Effectiveness - How Well Does the Flu Vaccine Work?*

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/vaccineeffect.htm>