



Testimony of Robert Nelson Vance, OAMF Secretary
Oppose Ohio House Bill 559
Health Committee
May 23, 2018

Chairman Huffman, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio and Honorable Members of the Health Committee, thank you for allowing me to speak today about why I oppose Ohio House Bill 559.

My name is Robert Vance, I am the Secretary of Ohio Advocates for Medical Freedom and the father of two healthy and happy children. Today you will hear testimony on the countless reasons why HB 559 is flawed, at best. But I want to address a specific statement that was made at the last hearing, which referred to the opposition as a “small minority”.

I want to assure you that, while small, the opposition is not insignificant. Which is why I want to speak to you today on behalf of the countless Ohio parents who are unable to be here today to speak for themselves. Our organization has been collecting letters of opposition regarding HB 559. Today I would like to enter into the record over a thousand letters of opposition from parents across the state who also oppose this bill.

We have spoken with many of these parents and their reasons for opposing this bill range greatly - including religious freedom, parental rights, and some have even suffered through the injury or loss of a child. Since several of the proponents provided anecdotal stories last week in an attempt to justify their efforts to coerce more parents into vaccinating their children, I will share with you just four real quick stories that counter their hyperbole.

- Melicia from Darke County shared with me that when she was a teenager, she received the Influenza vaccine over Thanksgiving break – subsequently, she lost her voice, her heart rate skyrocketed, and her face became swollen. She was diagnosed with Graves’ Disease and continues to suffer Fibromyalgia. Once she eventually had her son Hunter, she trusted her pediatrician who told her vaccines were safe, effective, and necessary. So Hunter received all of his newborn vaccinations. Melicia says that he began to have digestive issues, developed Eczema, and her new pediatrician believes Hunter has Celiac Disease.
- Morgan from Elmore explained to me that her perfectly healthy son Drew had just celebrated his third birthday when he received both the Influenza and Polio vaccinations. Less than six days later, Drew suffered a range of symptoms and doctors would eventually diagnose him with Type 1 Diabetes.
- Donelle in Kettering told me that her son Kaleb received his DPT vaccine at 6 weeks old, immediately spiked a fever, began convulsing, and vomiting. He was diagnosed with Encephalitis. Kaleb endured developmental delays, muscle atrophy, was later diagnosed with Autism, is now 26 years old, and remains non-verbal.
- Sarah in Oak Harbor shared with me that her daughter Peyton was vaccinated on schedule and she later connected that it was after each vaccination her daughter would spike a fever and scream for days. Peyton developed various health problems, including reflux, anaphylactic food allergies, vision and hearing issues, Sensory Processing Disorder, and experienced multiple regressions. Peyton is now thirteen and remains neuro-developmentally and intellectually disabled.

Parents across the state choose not to vaccinate their children for a variety of reasons – some medical, some religious, and some have just plain old philosophical differences in how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Regardless, dismissing these parents, and the aforementioned parents with vaccine injured children, as an “insignificant minority”, or “cost of doing business” is not only callous, it just demonstrates the significant conflict of interest the proponents demonstrated last week.

To pretend that HB 559 is about vaccination rate tracking is a strawman argument. If this bill were about tracking, proponents wouldn’t have mentioned multiple times last week that vaccination rates will increase as a result of this bill. The proponents spent nearly all of their time delivering testimony that vaccines are safe, effective, and necessary. They neglected to acknowledge that vaccines come with any risk. Furthermore, they spent very little time discussing the merits of this bill or how it would be implemented from even a logistical or financial perspective. So, despite their testimony last week, many of our questions and concerns are left unanswered.

For the sake of tomorrow’s children, I hope that said vaccine “education” is more educational than the very lacking testimony proponents provided last week, or the very lacking informed consent the aforementioned parents received before their children became vaccine injured. Each of the parents of vaccine injured children I mentioned previously may have chosen a different path of care for their children had they been truly informed of the potential risk.

Among many other reasons that time does not permit me to delineate, these parents, their children, and their liberty is why I oppose HB 559.

Sincerely,



Robert Nelson Vance
Secretary, Ohio Advocates for Medical Freedom