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Committees:

Vice Chair of Energy and Natural Resources
Agriculture & Rural Development
Public Utilities

State Representative Christina M. Hagan
Ohio House District 50

House Bill 193
February 28, 2018

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Health Committee: thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 193. This legislation has been crafted after hearing the concerns of many Ohioans, health care professionals in particular, whose personal freedoms are being infringed upon as it relates to the ever increasing pressures and employment demands related to the influenza vaccination. HB 193 brings Ohio in line with 13 other states that prohibit the flu vaccine from being a mandatory term of employment.

On behalf of a medical professional from House District 50, who is being adversely impacted by employer mandated influenza vaccinations, I am carrying this legislation to empower Ohioans and give them the right to refuse the flu vaccine without placing their jobs in jeopardy. **HB 193 is not concerning the pro-vaccine, anti-vaccine debate; rather, this bill is about professionals maintaining their rights as a patient when making a medical decision** and is specific to only the influenza vaccination.

Many people, especially those who are in the business of keeping themselves and others healthy, do not want to inject strands of flu viruses into their system recognizing that the repercussions are not necessarily known nor are the positive intentions guaranteed. When this legislation was originally introduced, after the 2014-2015 flu season, the efficacy rate was at 23%. For populations under 2 and over 65 years of age the efficacy rates are even lower. This flu season,

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the efficacy rate is only 36% overall and more American's are finding themselves in outpatient care for influenza-like illnesses (ILI) this year than in any other year¹.

Voluntarily agreeing to take the flu vaccine, knowing the risks and low efficacy rate is a right that should be maintained, but to mandate such a vaccine or face termination of employment is an egregious violation of personal freedom. This legislation is necessary to preserve the autonomy of the individual. I am both pro-business and pro individual responsibility; I understand that there are substantial pressures on these medical institutions to increase rates of influenza vaccinations in correlation with their federal reimbursements. However, the federal government should not be deciding for the individual what is best for their individual healthcare situation. Many respected professionals have left their place of employment or switched careers to protect themselves from this federal trend.

Thank you for allowing me to express the concerns that health care professionals from my district and all across the country have brought to me, I hope you will provide these individuals with due consideration. I look forward to answering any questions you might have to the best of my ability, if I am unable to answer today we will ensure to provide you with the appropriate medical professionals with expertise to do so.

¹ According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. See [Figure 4](#).