

SB311 Proponent Testimony

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House State and Local Government Committee

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To Chairman Wiggam, Vice- Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly and Honorable Members of the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding SB311. **I am a proponent of SB311** because I believe that the governor of Ohio and the un-elected director of the Ohio Department of Health have exhibited and exerted authority over Ohioans beyond the scope of their designated roles. We have seen increasing mandates which restrict freedoms of individuals, businesses, and other groups over the past 8 months. We have seen both the governor and the directors of the health department base decisions on erroneous theoretical data and appear to refuse to alter course once more sound data was shown in our state. This amount of power should never be given to the executive branch and an un-elected official without the balance of power from our elected representatives. We have chosen representatives to be our voice in matters like these and yet our current law leaves us voiceless against the Department of Health.

We Ohioans possess certain unalienable rights to decide our place of employment, to receive in-person education as we choose, vote in person, shop in person, visit with our loved ones in the manner we chose -whether at home or in a nursing home, have an advocate with us in person to any medical appointment or hospitalization, and decide upon mask wearing. We should be able to decide what possible risks to health and safety exist and take measures as appropriate as an individual with individual needs. We should not be forcing health decisions on anyone. Doctors, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners can recommend a certain course of treatment or care plan but cannot force it upon their patients. The patient must accept the responsibility of the risk vs benefit for any treatment, medication, or procedure. Here we have a governor who is not even a physician not only acting like a physician, but then mandating his treatment plan against the wishes of the people and in direct disregard to the need for individual care. We are daily losing freedoms and yet this loss of freedom is not going to result in halting a virus which has been in circulation for a year.

Not only has he mandated certain measures, but the results of his lockdown measures have caused compounding effects. Surgeries and procedures which should have been standard have become more complicated with increased adverse effects due to not receiving the care in a proper time frame. Many were made to be afraid to seek care and sat at home and ultimately had heart attacks and strokes not treated in a timely manner- the complications of which can be more significant than we would see for those with prompt treatment. How many have delayed screening care for cancers this year resulting in later or late diagnosis of a cancer that could have been treated promptly and lead to a much better outcome? Are we seeing fuller hospitals now here in the fall due to all the delays in care all summer? Are hospitals really back at full capacity after furloughing or laying off nurses earlier this year? These are serious questions we face now

as a result of drastic actions made on the basis of erroneous data last March. We must seriously now consider how many deaths have or will occur as a direct result of his actions to alter the way we seek healthcare and the amount of it we truly receive.

SB311 is an important checks and balance that I believe our founding fathers cherished when they made us a constitutional republic. We need you as our representatives to have a clear role and voice in matters like these. The well-being of our businesses, economy, our social and emotional well-being, and the futures of our children depends on this. We cannot continue to survive under the continued oppressive orders of our over-reaching governor. It has been **eight months** now that he has made mandates for this “emergency” which did not overwhelm our hospitals in March and April. It is time for you as our representatives to take action and have a part in this situation. I appreciate the ability to submit this testimony to you and I urge you to uphold your oath to the constitution and protect our unalienable rights by voting **yes to SB311**.

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