

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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October 5, 2021

The Honorable Dick Stein, Chair
Commerce and Labor Committee
Ohio House of Representatives

RE: Opposition testimony - HB 435

Dear Chairmen Stein:

The evidence is abundant and clear that vaccination is our way out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio currently ranks 35th among the 50 states in the percent of population fully vaccinated. We can and must do better, for the sake of our most vulnerable citizens, for our children, for our economy. Given the continuing surge of COVID-19, with all 88 counties in Ohio at high transmission, HB435 would greatly hinder the opportunity for Ohio to move past the pandemic, for good. Now is the time to encourage vaccination rather than discouraging it. Over 59% of Cuyahoga County residents have started vaccination and 55% have completed vaccination. In Cuyahoga County, we continue to offer first and second doses of vaccine and incentivize the process to protect as many people as we can.

It is equally important for Ohio employers to have the freedom to institute all health and safety measures that best serve employees and the needs of their business.

As clearly stated in the Coalition opposition letter to HB435, "...the provisions of House Bill 435 fall short of what our state needs as we work toward pandemic recovery, and this bill does not address the concerns expressed by the medical, business and university communities about prior proposals of a similar nature. Protection of an employer's rights to make decisions in the best interest of their employees and those we serve cannot be overstated."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. Please contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Terry Allan, MPH
Health Commissioner

5550 Venture Drive ♦ Parma, Ohio 44130

Direct: 216-201-2000 ♦ Fax: 216-676-1311 ♦ TTY: 216-676-1313 ♦ www.ccbh.net

Terrence M. Allan, R.S., M.P.H. Health Commissioner