



Opponent Testimony
Association of Ohio Health Commissioners
House Bill 435
10/6/21

Chairman Stein, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC) and its 113 local health department members, this testimony is submitted in opposition to House Bill 435.

As proposed, the bill imposes prohibitions on private businesses and other entities across the state of Ohio related to vaccination to prevent COVID-19 and limit its impact on the health and wellness of Ohioans. We believe that the business community should have the option to require this highly effective and safe vaccine for their employees. Such a commitment by business entities demonstrates not only their concern for the economic success of their business, but also the health and safety of their employees and customers.

Further, the timing of this proposal is extremely short-sighted, given that Ohio and the nation are just beginning to recover from the latest surge of the Delta variant of the virus. In order to prevent future surges and successfully and permanently emerge from the constant impact of this virus, we must continue to increase the number of Ohioans protected by vaccination.

Vaccination is our best weapon to ultimately control the spread of this disease; therefore, legitimate exemptions should be as limited as possible. The public health system has been working, along with our community partners, since February 2020 to gain the upper hand against this virus. We ask for your help by encouraging vaccination, rather than promoting broad and wide opportunities to be exempted from vaccination requirements aimed at promoting the health and safety of our citizens.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose HB 435 and we ask that you not move the bill forward.

As always, we welcome the opportunity to participate in the dialogue on this life-and-death issue, including any proposals the General Assembly may have to bring this virus under control.

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