



October 5, 2021

Representative Dick Stein  
House Labor and Commerce Committee  
77 South High Street, 12th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: HB 435

Dear Chairman Stein,

On behalf of the Ohio Public Health Association, I am writing to express my opposition to HB 435.

The Ohio Public Health Association is the inclusive voice of public health in Ohio, where we strive to create communities that have access to the care, information, and resources needed to be healthy. We have members throughout Ohio, across various disciplines ranging from public health nurses, administrators, epidemiologists, physicians, educators, registrars, environmental health specialists, dentists, and others, many of whom have been directly involved with the COVID-19 response in our state. OPHA and our members have concerns with both the content and the timing of this bill.

Throughout this pandemic, employers have had to make difficult decisions to defend the health and safety interests of their employees and customers. This includes requiring vaccinations to protect their workforce, reducing the impact of the pandemic on their businesses and resources, and protecting vulnerable customers and clients. By legislating restrictions on vaccine mandates, with no justification required, HB 435 would eliminate the rights employers have to take action to protect their employees, customers, and ultimately the health of their businesses.

We know that vaccines of all types have been proven effective and safe. Numerous studies have shown that the Covid -19 vaccine reduces the incidence of serious illness and hospitalization. The General Assembly should work with employers, educators, health care providers, and the public to find ways to encourage - and increase - vaccination rates, rather than facilitate further delays in reaching critical herd immunity. It is incumbent upon legislative leaders to protect the health and safety of all Ohioans. HB 435 undermines this important mandate. We urge you to vote against HB 435.

In Health,

*Cheryl Davis*

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