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May 21, 2021

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248.

My name is Barbara Richards and I am a grandmother, mother, wife, and administrative secretary and treasurer of a synagogue. The reason I support House Bill 248 is because my rights to attend religious services were taken away from me when the mandate to wear a mask was imposed by Gov. DeWine. For many months, I was unable to worship with my faith family because health reasons did not allow me to wear a mask for an extended period of time. My young granddaughters missed out on fundamental teachings during this early time in their lives which is upsetting to me.

It has been difficult for me to shop for groceries and necessities because of this mask mandate. It is hard for me to breathe with the mask on. Several times in the store while shopping, I felt faint with a sweating forehead and had to lean over the shopping cart for fear of passing out and falling.

I also work a seasonal job grading State given assessment tests. Recently, I've worked remotely from my home. The opportunity arose where we could continue working on a different project but that was on-site where a mask was mandatory. A face shield was not allowed. So, there was no chance I could take one of the on-site positions.

My constitutional rights were taken away from me and for this reason I support House Bill 248.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,

Barbara Richards