



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

My name is Mona E. Mansour, M.D., M.S., FAAP. I am a practicing primary care pediatrician at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and the Associate Director for Population Health in the Division of General and Community Pediatrics. I stand in opposition to HB-248, a bill that will negatively impact the health and safety of Ohioans. I have been practicing pediatrics for almost 30 years and have personally witnessed the profound benefits of vaccinating children and adolescents from communicable diseases. I have also had the unfortunate circumstance to care for children who have gotten vaccine preventable diseases that have resulted in prolonged hospitalizations and significant morbidity to the child not to mention the mental, physical, and financial stress placed on the caregivers. Vaccines are a critical public health measure to ensure that we do not see resurgence of diseases that we have long eradicated. The enactment of this bill has the serious possibility of setting us back decades. Vaccines and public health measures like masking represent some of the safest and most effective strategies we have at keeping children and communities healthy. I have spent my professional career advocating for health services and systems for children who are most vulnerable.

Our economy is able to re-open because we have been effective in ensuring public safety measures like social distancing and masking, but also because we have been able to vaccinate against COVID-19.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opposition to this bill.

Sincerely,

Mona E. Mansour , MD, MS , FAAP