

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in opposition to House Bill 248. My name is Kenneth Johnson and I am a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio.

It is truly disappointing that I must plead with my own state legislature to not undermine one of the greatest public health triumphs in modern history. Vaccines work. They save lives. Measles, polio, COVID-19, and other vaccine-preventable diseases are not and should never be partisan issues.

House Bill 248 will mean fewer vaccinated children. It will restrict the freedom of hospitals and businesses to protect their employees and patients. It will inexplicably prevent hospitals and other healthcare facilities from taking necessary steps to control the spread of infectious disease.

One may wish to redecorate their disregard for this reality as a question of personal liberty. However, speaking of personal liberty while stripping schools, hospitals, employers, and families of proven tools to protect themselves and others against catastrophic disease is disingenuous at best.

Today I ask that you vote against House Bill 248. I also ask any legislator who does intend to vote for this bill to publicly commit to visiting the families of those who will inevitably die of vaccine-preventable disease as a result, so that they can explain how their loved one's loss was a necessary step on the path to liberty from settled medical science.