

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 Amanda Brindley and I am a nanny and freelance writer here in Ohio. The reason I support House Bill 248 is because it is apparent to me that our medical privacy and freedom to choose or decline medical procedures must be protected by law. Many companies and government entities are mandating Covid-19 injections for their employees in Ohio. In other states businesses and local governments are requiring vaccine passports for basic participation in society like going out to a restaurant. My friends and family members are facing discrimination at work where they are being told they must be vaccinated or either undergo weekly tests for Covid-19 or lose their jobs. This kind of discrimination must not be tolerated.

Some people argue that hospitals and businesses requiring a Covid vaccine is no different than requiring an influenza or MMR vaccine. However, the Covid vaccines are available only under emergency use authorization and have no long-term data for efficacy or safety. They are the first vaccines of their kind that have been widely distributed and people should not be forced to receive them for any medical or non-medical reason.

The CDC website clearly states that "The FDA must ensure that recipients of the vaccine under an EUA are informed, to the extent practicable given the applicable circumstances, that FDA has authorized the emergency use of the vaccine, of the known and potential benefits and risks, the extent to which such benefits and risks are unknown, **that they have the option to accept or refuse the vaccine**, and of any available alternatives to the product." Mandating experimental injections is not in keeping with EUA policies, nor is it an ethical practice. Experimental procedures require informed consent and we must put an end to what is happening now: massive coercion with insufficient information.

As those who choose to be unvaccinated suffer shaming, discrimination, and violation of medical privacy, businesses and Governor Dewine have refused to consider the strong evidence that natural immunity is robust and long-lasting¹ for those who have recovered from a Covid-19 infection. Alternative prophylactic treatments like Ivermectin, Hydroxychloroquine, Zinc, and Remdesivir have also been ignored. The messaging from Governor Dewine and the mandates being forced on our citizens by employers are not based in "science" or best practices. Furthermore, mandating any experimental medical procedure is unethical and violates the terms of emergency use authorizations. We need House Bill 248 to become law to protect those of us who refuse this or other vaccines from discrimination.

¹ Cohen, Kristen W., et al. "Longitudinal analysis shows durable and broad immune memory after SARS-CoV-2 infection with persisting antibody responses and memory B and T cells." Medrxiv (2021).

With House Bill 248 on the table, you have a choice. Will you stand with the people you represent and defend our right to choose and our freedom of bodily autonomy? Or will you sacrifice us to do what is popular? No business, hospital, or government official has the right to choose which experimental medical procedures are best for every person in our state. Will you stand by our freedom to make individual choices and to maintain our personal privacy?

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

Sincerely,

Amanda Brindley