

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

My name is Lori Weisend and I am the Administrative Assistant (and Records Clerk) for the Athens City Police Department. I am in support of House Bill 248 because I will be fired soon if this does not go through.

On August 6, 2021, the City of Athens created and announced a new policy mandating that all city employees will:

- Provide proof of vaccination or indicate if they're unvaccinated by August 13, 2021
- Those who do provide proof by August 13, 2021, will receive \$100 for themselves, \$25 for vaccinated spouse and each dependent, along with 8 comp hours
- Mandate the vaccination once any one or more of the vaccines become FDA approved or be fired after 90 days of such date
- Disallowed all training and travel for unvaccinated city employees
- Added masks and social distancing back

Few in our police department are vaccinated, and of those, many, if not all, who have been vaccinated wish they weren't. We have 2 young Lieutenants who now have heart palpitations who did not have them prior to the vaccine and doctors/specialists cannot find a source as to why.

There is already proof that the vaccine does not stop someone from spreading Covid, it does not stop someone from getting Covid, and it does not stop someone from dying from Covid. I had a friend pass away from Covid 2 weeks ago, who was vaccinated. We are already reading that boosters are needed and that the Delta variant is no different to a vaccinated person as an unvaccinated person.

There is already proof that the vaccine does cause heart issues, organ issues, menstrual issues and miscarriages in women, and more. We do not know the long term effects. It typically takes a decade or more and numerous studies before a vaccine is approved. Yet this one is being pushed through in less than a year with so much unknown long term affects.

A vaccine, especially as new as this, is experimental at best. We as free citizens of the United States of America, should not be forced to take it in such early stages even if there is FDA approval. The White House, the CDC, and the WHO even have not mandated their employees to take it. So why should I be?

I am in a job I love. A job I hope I can stay at and retire from. I have a daughter who just started college yesterday (August 18, 2021). I have a son who is in elementary school. Losing my job would create a HUGE economic hardship on my family. I don't want to lose it, but I will if I'm forced to be vaccinated. And I know of officers and dispatchers in our department who will also be fired. We have a young officer in investigations who wants to be a mom and scared of the effects of the vaccine. We have a dispatcher who is immunocompromised and worried for her health with the vaccine. Losing a handful in our department will put a major dent in our department and the safety of our community. And furthermore, hinder hiring practices in the future. And we now have officers who cannot get further training to be able to better assist the citizens in this community, because they do not have the vaccine

and are not allowed to travel out of the city for it.

And this is not only affecting the police department, but our fire department, our city/street crews, our water treatment crews, our court system, etc.

And what's next? If they mandate the vaccine, what will we be mandated to do next? We have to fight for our civil liberties. The vaccine should be a CHOICE and our healthcare should be PRIVATE.

So in closing, please pass the House Bill 248 to stop the mandate of the Covid vaccination. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Weisend". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lori Weisend