

Proponent Testimony for HB 90 to limit Governor's/Health Department's powers :

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Reform Committee:

I am providing my written testimony in favor of HB 90 as an Ohio resident deeply concerned about courses of action being taken under the current emergency powers and the dire effects it is having on all of us.

Please establish legislative oversight over Governor's and health department's orders.

This bill restores the balance of power to where it should be, between the three, COEQUAL branches of government, and finally gives a VOICE to the PEOPLE of Ohio via their legislators during a declared emergency.

Our businesses, our economy, our social and emotional well-being and the future of our children are on the line. Our state cannot thrive under the continued oppressive and unopposed orders of an over-reaching Governor. Mainstream medicine & the executive branch of our government are ignoring the harms of the Covid prevention policies that they are enforcing. **Those of us who see the harms of the Covid policies have had our voices drowned out by the expert class. This expert class of mainstream doctors have elite privilege of getting their voices heard at the top levels of government. We need to be able to have our voices heard also.** We need a return to the balance of power, to ensure that the average citizen's voice is heard.

The Covid RESPONSE has caused more problems than Covid itself. We must be allowed to say "no" to medical expert advice that WE can see with our own eyes is truly hurting our lives much more than it is helping to curb this one virus.

The ongoing ability of a group of experts (the Ohio Dept of Health and mainstream hospitals) and one man (Governor DeWine) to singlehandedly decide which data gets included in prolonging our state of medical emergency - and thus their power - is medical fascism. My family came to this country to escape our country of origin that was tyrannical and murderous because too much power had been placed centrally. I know my own family history enough to know to be very alarmed when so much power over daily life is handed over to an elite group, especially when that same elite group 'cancels' -- and tell everyone else to scoff at -- anyone who may see things differently.

The governor and his experts have indicated to us that church doesn't matter, family Thanksgivings don't matter, hugs don't matter, wedding celebrations don't matter, smiles don't matter, faces don't matter -- they've said all that matters is that you do not catch this ONE virus. They've told my patients that having family members at their bedside no longer matters -- after years of nursing education that taught me the opposite, that patients do best when their loved ones are near them. I've seen hatred, discrimination and harassment in our grocery stores where there used to be neighborly smiles and conversation. I've seen division and hatred and fear in our families & churches where there used to be fellowship. Fear of others -- seeing others as a germ rather than as a human -- is having a devastating effect. Shaming & blaming each other just for being what we are

- a human being - is destroying families and society. **Constant messages of Covid fear on billboards, and ODOT signs are causing immense problems – not solutions.**

In our “old normal”, medicine was the art an individual doctor *discussing* with an individual, unique patients - of balancing risks vs benefits of any particular treatment. **This past year, we have acted as if any random public policy against Covid can only have benefits – and no harms.** There are many of us who are silently suffering the harms.

There are many who are silently suffering, whose voices have been canceled:

- the isolated widower who only saw kind smiles when he went out grocery shopping;
- children & the mentally disabled who rely on kind facial expressions to be reassured of their surroundings;
- those survivors of past domestic abuse who are now forced to, once again, do things against their will;
- those who came to the US as refugees escaping oppressive tyranny, thinking that the US would always allow them their conscience rights who now are experiencing psychological trauma in seeing history on repeat;
- as well as those who physically are unable to tolerate the covering of our only mode of breathing and facial expression.

Medical professionals can give their expert opinion. However, we ourselves are the experts in our own complex lives. We must be allowed to make our own decisions. I’m a nurse – I have always made sure to advocate for my patient’s autonomy. I’ve always made sure my patients knew that the doctors’ advice was just that – advice – and that only the patient himself can decide whether the advice makes sense for his own life. After 15 years of advocating for my patients’ rights in this way, I am appalled that medical advice is being forced upon me. Please give us our autonomy back. Please give us our voice back.

The only thing Governor Dewine and his experts in the ODH have done is to have added hatred, cruelty, blame and division on top of a virus problem. That is just about the worst way they could have handled things.

I would like to call out to both opponents and proponents of HB 90: **we all have a shared goal – human thriving!** We all want the same thing. Do not shame us. We are not “science deniers”, we are not “grandma killers”. We are like you. We want human thriving. Those of us who are proponents of HB 90 want human thriving in the holistic sense. We are seeing the harms of thinking of it only in the physical sense. I see the harms in the eyes of our family’s children, in the loneliness of our adults, in the depression of our teenagers, in the suicides, in the family divisions. Please hear us, and not only these experts whose focus is so narrow.

These hyper-focused experts are paid to have a narrow focus on one part of life – physical health (and this year, even more hyper-focused, physical health in relation to this one virus). YOU, representatives, are paid to have a wide focus on the holistic lives of all your constituents. It’s time you hear us. Please pass HB 90, pass it immediately – we emergently need our real society back.

Please stand up and protect our personal liberties and the future of our state by voting YES on HB 90!

Thank you,

Michelle Plecnik