

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

Thank you for allowing me to present proponent testimony today on HB90 as a physician and concerned Ohio citizen. Thank you for allowing me to have a voice.

COVID 19 has affected many Ohioans in this past year.

The management of COVID 19 has affected many Ohioans in this past year.

Both of these statements are true, one doesn't have to be greater than the other. We don't have to argue that the life of someone taken by his own hand in desperation after losing everything is weightier than life lost by infection.

I think we could all agree that something of this magnitude should not be taken lightly. As lawmakers, I don't have to tell you that your decisions have significant consequences.

I find it slightly ironic that I am here asking you to vote for the right to have a say in the decision-making process. Why are we left asking for a balance of government? Why are we left asking for you to vote for your own power back? Where are the limits here? Where does this end? Where is the accountability? Why does this even have to be an ask? This bill is not an argument over the number of deaths in Ohio or what citizens have lost in the wake. It is an argument for our very government to be reinstated to the nature of which it was designed: with three balanced branches. The governor stated during his press conference yesterday that "because of a new variant, now is not the time to subvert my authority". Does this mean that you are not necessary for decision making?

I've heard those opposed to this bill use Ebola as an example as to why we can't pass this. No one is asking to take away emergency powers. We are 11 months in. This is not emergency power; this is just power. THIS is what we are asking to rebalance.

I've heard testimony opposed to this bill use the fact that we have done so much better than other places when it comes to our death rate and therefore that is proof that our mitigation measures are working. Unfortunately for them, 4,000 more deaths were reported hours after their testimony. If you compare us to Sweden, who is equal in population to Ohio and did nothing as drastic as us, death trends are nearly identical (see graphs) and this last reported batch of deaths actually puts us at greater numbers. The entire nation had similar trends in the fall despite individual states using a variety of measures (see graph). Maybe it is worth a conversation at this point, involving more than the "experts" who have been allowed to have a voice thus far.

One could easily make an argument, using ODH's own data, that none of the mandates put into place have affected the outcomes of this entire pandemic (see graphs, credit: Kathryn Huwig, Understanding Ohio COVID-19 Data on FaceBook). You *could* potentially determine this if these

things were being reviewed. As it stands, no one has presented any scientific evidence to justify anything that has been used. We *have* heard multiple times however, claims presented as fact without any need to back it up. For example, when justifying the curfew mandate the governor stated "This is just basic evidence. We know that the virus spreads when people gather inside and this cuts the hours they can do that. There was a dramatic slowdown when those things were put into effect" (see graph). Doesn't it make sense to have to justify drastic measures and perhaps do a cost/benefit analysis at some point?

ICU usage has been determined to be the most important factor for justifying mandates. Let me explain how that math is done. Even with this, ICU bed usage has followed what is commonly known in virology as "Farr's Law" with no effect on that predictable curve from the mandates (see graph). The numbers are plummeting. When are we done masking? Distancing? Where is the end zone?

The current case positivity rate is at 4.2%, even with "probables" as high as 42%. The WHO defines a pandemic over at <5%. When are we allowed to freely intermingle again? Who is allowed to have these conversations?

The people have had no voice. You yourselves have not had a voice. To me, THIS is the most pressing emergency.

I have a simple ask: vote yes on HB90. Vote yes to have a voice.