

Testimony of Jamie Rathod

2/17/2021

Proponent  
House Bill 90

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent written testimony on behalf of House Bill 90. My name is Jamie Rathod. For almost a year now, Ohioans have been under the most egregious overreach of emergency orders, put into place by the Ohio Department of Health and Governor Dewine. We were told throughout this pandemic that many of these orders would only be for a short period of time, two weeks until we flattened the curve, and we're all in this together was the mantra. In lieu of flattening the curve our schools were canceled, our places of worship shut down (violating our first amendment rights), festivities banned, small businesses closed, sporting events ceased and even our children's outdoor playgrounds became fortresses of caution tape and signs of DO NOT ENTER. We were told to shelter in place for two weeks, but after those two weeks the restrictions only became more constricting with each passing day.

The daily press conferences only provided information related to gloom and doom, leaving many Ohioans paralyzed in fear, without ever acknowledging those who without incident recovered from the Sars CoV2 infection, which has a survivability rate of 99.74%. The information presented to us from the beginning was based on an empirical model from Neil Ferguson that proved to be absolutely incorrect. But nonetheless our Governor waited until the month of July to put into effect a mandatory mask order, during one of the hottest months of the year.

We were told who was essential and who wasn't, causing many family owned businesses to close their doors permanently, all the while allowing large corporate entities to stay open and thrive. The ODH even requested members of the community to photograph and report people who were not complying with the governor's mask order, pinning citizen against citizen. But it didn't stop there, city officials in certain cities called on citizens to report how many visitors their neighbors had, if it went over a certain number of guest. I recall a time in history where a particular country encouraged these same type of dictatorial views, we all know how well that ended.

Our medical procedures such as surgeries and chemo therapy were halted, causing harm to our most vulnerable population, under the guise that it was to prevent a lack of hospital beds, which never came to fruition. Our elderly have been imprisoned, secluded and isolated in their long term care facilities, unable to see or even hug their loved ones. My 81 year old grandma fought off every physician and nurse at University Hospital at the end of October 2020, after a fall that resulted in a broken femur and fracture of her lumbar spine. She adamantly informed the staff repeatedly, "I'm not going to be put in no nursing home away from my family, I don't care what you say and you cannot force me to go." I think that's a pretty good indication of how our elderly feel about being kept from their family long term. So, I left my family in Cuyahoga County to live with my grandmother in Portage until she regained her mobility. I brought home a Nana that couldn't even walk. It was a sacrifice that if presented with again, would result in the same decision.

The good news is you have the ability to restore our balance of powers by voting yes on HB90. A Constitutional Democratic Republic only works when the legislature who represents the people votes to pass laws, not an unchecked ODH and Governor with unyielding constraints. Thank you so much for this opportunity to provide testimony, and I can answer any questions you may have for me at this time.

Kindest Regards, Jamie Rathod

