

Witness Statement

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Provisions of HB 218 fall short of what our state needs as we work toward pandemic recovery, and this bill does not address the concerns expressed by the medical, business and university communities about prior proposals of a similar nature. Protection of an employer's rights to make decisions in the best interest of their employees and those we serve cannot be overstated. Due to the nature of our work, Healthcare workers (HCWs) are at risk for exposure to serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases. The CDC recommends all that work directly with patients or handle material that could spread infection, to get appropriate vaccines in order to reduce the risk of contracting or spreading vaccine-preventable diseases. This is nothing new to healthcare and has been a professional standard throughout my 17 year nursing career. It is a well-known requirement for all HCWs who enter the field; thus, mandating the COVID-19 vaccination should not be an unreasonable request from healthcare organizations across the nation. These pre-employment (including students onsite) vaccines include: Hep B, flu, varicella, Tdap and meningococcal. It is our professional duty to "do no harm" and preventing the risk of COVID-19 transmission is part of that.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html>