

June 10, 2024

Dear Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Provider Services Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide support testimony for HB 319; "The Conscientious Right to Refuse Act.

It is extremely important to me to be retain the right to decline any medical procedure or vaccine without the threat of discrimination. I was discriminated against by my mental health doctor and therapist back in 2020 and 2021 and in turn was released from the office due to my decision to not get the experimental covid shot. I did not feel the risk outweighed the benefit for me. I was treated differently and not allowed to come into the office for therapy sessions but required to do virtual appointments. I have OCD and this has caused negative impacts in my health and my relationship with my therapist. I have yet to find another therapist and I struggle on a regular basis.

All Ohioans, including myself, should have their right of conscience and/or religion protected from the medical over-reach of employers or those providing public services. Both the U.S. and Ohio State constitutions address the right of conscious and religious freedom. It is time to make sure that those freedoms are protected at the state level. I urge the committee members to please vote yes on HB 319."

Respectfully submitted,

Ashlee Ellis