

12/05/2024

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Public Health Policy Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide support testimony for HB 617; "UN-Mask Ohio."

During the COVID, my family and I were forced to wear a mask for work and in public spaces, even though there were already many studies proving they were, at best, ineffective or at worst, detrimental to our physical, mental, and spiritual health. Whenever any of us were maskless, we were verbally harassed and denied access to some public places, such as grocery stores and places of worship. Major life events were disrupted, i.e. weddings delayed and visits postponed due to the viewpoint that unless people masked we would all get COVID and risk death. Time missed with loved ones that we will never get backed. We were made to feel like we didn't care about other people's health and ostracized by family, coworkers, friends and even strangers, who felt compelled to comment on our personal health decisions and deny us access to spaces.

This should never happen again. Health mandates are wrong, especially ones those that have been shown to have known risks. People need to have freedom to choose what is best for their own health without the fear of repercussions from others.

I urge the committee members to please vote yes on HB 617.

Sincerely,
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