

March 24, 2026

Dear Chairman/Chairwoman/Chairperson Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member White, and members of the Health Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Pamela Roesch, MPH. I am a public health researcher and program evaluator with over 18 years of experience in public health and healthcare, much of which is in maternal and child health and public health data systems. I am strongly opposed to HB561.

I am testifying as a mother of three young children in Mason, Ohio, who attend public schools. This bill is dangerously shortsighted. To protect all children, vaccination rates must remain high. Allowing families to forgo vaccines based on misinformation and politicized fear will not only endanger their children but also mine. We have already seen the consequences in other states. Measles outbreaks in South Carolina, Utah, Texas and Florida have led to hospitalizations, lifelong complications and school closures.

Vaccines are proven to be far more protective than harmful. Weakening Ohio's vaccine policy will only invite the same crises and deepen public mistrust. I want my children to learn, play, and live freely, without fear of preventable diseases.

Beyond my own family, I think of children who have no say in whether they are vaccinated, such as the child who ends up hospitalized, or the little girl recovering from cancer who must leave school because a classmate is unvaccinated. These are not abstract statistics. They are the real costs of loosening vaccine protections. The burden will not fall on lawmakers. It will fall on Ohio families and our children.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote *NO* on this harmful bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Pamela T. Roesch, MPH
Ohio Resident