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Proponent Testimony – Sub HB 248

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Honorable Members of the House Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to give proponent testimony on Sub House Bill 248.

My name is Anne Abbott and I support Sub House Bill 248 because my daughter's future matters too. 9 years ago, we essentially sacrificed our daughter's "normal" life because we were told to vaccinate her "for the greater good". In June of 2012, we changed her life because we were coerced into making a medical decision, without all the facts and research, to help keep everyone else "safe and protected." Unfortunately, we did not keep our own daughter safe and protected then, so now we are fighting to keep her from even more discrimination, exclusion, and medical harm.

Our daughter had to have a Right Functional Hemispherectomy in 2014, at the age of 3, to save her life from Rasmussen Encephalitis as a result of her MMR vaccine. The US Department of HHS recently conceded in our case and confirmed what we knew all along; that her first and only MMR vaccine, caused her R.E., therefore leading to her hemispherectomy. Roz was left with half her brain; half her vision; gastro, pulmonary, neurological, and multiple physical disabilities along with remaining susceptible to febrile seizures when ill. Due to all the medical effects from her vaccine injury, she already faces discrimination and exclusion from typical, everyday activities. Her personal health and safety does not rest in the hands of others. It is our responsibility to choose what keeps her safe and we do not rely on others' medical choices to protect her.

Sub House Bill 248 will prevent Rozlyn from being discriminated, excluded and coerced into even more medical harm. She will continue to enjoy her everyday freedoms, in which we are granted at birth. If we do not protect personal autonomy and vaccine choice, we will be denying, others like Roz, from having the same freedoms as everyone else. Rozlyn has already been denied access to stores because she is unable to wear a mask for longer than 15 minutes because she struggles to breathe properly with one on. A lack of proper oxygen could be quite harmful to her. She should not have to provide vaccine status, to enter a place of business without a mask. Her safety is just as important as those who do choose to vaccinate or to wear a mask.

Roz already has visible physical disabilities from her vaccine injury. She already gets looks, questions, and sadly is ignored by others because of her disabilities. If she has to disclose her vaccine status, this will inevitably cause more negative interaction for her. Her medical choices do not make her less of a person or an un-important member of society. I fear that more kids, along with their parents, will act negatively towards her, if they were to find out, she is not fully

vaccinated. I don't want her to be denied interaction with others because they fear her vaccine status. That information, is for her to disclose on her terms, not forced in to.

If vaccines are mandated for educational and employment acceptance, Rozlyn will be denied the right to an education and employment of her choice. She dreams of becoming a High Risk Obstetrics Nurse someday. If her medical choices and civil liberties are not protected, she may never have the chance to live out her dream. We already know that many medical settings currently mandate vaccines for place of employment and can deny exemptions due to public safety. What about her safety? How do you tell your child, that what caused her to be disabled, is now keeping her from what she wants to be?

As a mother, I fear she will, one day, be coerced into vaccination, so she is able to participate in society normally. I am scared that what the United States Government and medical specialists have already deemed unsafe for her, will ultimately, take more of her life away. We are raising her to know what happened to her and to educate her to make safe, proper medical decisions, for herself. But we all know how peer pressure can lead to making decisions that may be unsafe for one's self. I used to feel that the ADA exemption rights and accommodations, would protect her from these possible situations. But, recently, we have seen, businesses, colleges and employers denying these rights and exemptions without penalties. If there is nothing to protect my daughter and other's medical exemption rights, we are opening a door to allow future rights to be denied.

I come here today for my daughter, for others like her and ask you to vote in support for Sub Bill 248 and protect their medical autonomy and allow them to have equal opportunities without discrimination, exclusion or coercion.