

May 20, 2021

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248.

I am writing to you with an urgent need for action to uphold the medical freedoms that I hold dear. I am a mother of three children, the oldest of whom will start college this Fall. She has worked incredibly hard throughout her school career, skipped a grade, and has maintained a 4.3 grade point average. She received nearly a full scholarship to Bowling Green State University and will be entering the field of Biology. This past year she has suffered great depression while sitting in her bedroom day after day tackling online schooling offered through a College Credit Plus program to high school students through BGSU. It has been a disaster. My daughter did not have success learning this way; she actually failed a class she did not have to take because she had tested out of it, but chose to take it for the needed highschool credit. She thrives on in person learning and collaboration with fellow students and teachers. Online college is NOT an option for her as proven by her struggles this year.

BGSU sent a letter to students and parents yesterday which detailed their plans for the upcoming school year. Students who choose not to be vaccinated will be forced to wear a mask at all times, indoors and outdoors, even though the mandate will be lifted on May 2nd. They will be visibly marked as diseased individuals, and not allowed to work face to face with vaccinated peers. This segregation is not only unjust, but stirs up fear in this mother's heart.

This school year we have been able to limit our daughter's mask wearing to two hours a day because she does not have in person classes until noon. She has asthma and severe allergies that we have battled since she was three years old. Breathing is difficult for her without a mask, and induces panic, headaches, and exhaustion with a mask. She is extremely active in sports, but this year had to stop competing because she couldn't breathe well. She is also extremely musically talented and had a lead role in the school musical. Practices were fully masked, even while dancing and singing actively, and my daughter's lungs burned and she fought passing out. I had to fight the school to allow her to wear a face shield in place of the mask. They didn't care that masking was putting her life at risk until I told them I was pulling my daughter from the show.

My fears extend beyond the fact that constant masking is putting my daughter's health at risk. I fear for her personal safety being marked as an "anti-vaxxer" and viewed by all as diseased and repulsive due to the fact that she hasn't chosen to conform and get this very new, experimental technology. No woman should ever walk alone on that campus at night; now with swelling violence in our nation, especially with college aged citizens, I fear for my daughter in broad daylight as well. The mask makes this five foot 100 pound little girl a sitting duck for ridicule, being shunned by professors, staff, and peers, and potentially a victim of physical violence. How can I allow her to attend classes? It's not worth the risk. So, is our only option to stay locked in our home? Clearly online classes are not an option. Why did my daughter work so hard to find that she has no future and it was all in vain? If college isn't an option for her any longer, then what job can she obtain where she

won't be forced to inject this new technology into her body as well? Does life just stop at age 17 for her?

You may wonder why we choose not to take this shot. We have vaccinated our children for many of the diseases that have tried and true results. We feel that much more time and study must be done before we put something in our body that is so unknown. That is our choice. Our freedom to choose is very important to us and what makes being an American the greatest blessing bestowed upon each citizen. I was forced to take the flu shot before a necessary surgery several years ago. We normally do not take this vaccine, but it was not optional, so I signed on the dotted line and took the risk because I needed the surgery. Shortly after, I woke up one morning completely paralyzed in my right arm and left leg and lost feeling in much of my lower body. After a time, my condition improved and I worked very hard to regain my ability to walk and use my arm. I still struggle from weakness and have flare ups, especially when I am run down or have a cold. After being coerced to inject myself with a vaccine to protect others which caused me to lose the ability to function and not feel human touch, proves that the individual freedoms we hold dear have quietly been erased.

I pray the hopelessness I feel for my family while living in the state of Ohio can be wiped away and replaced with a renewed spirit of freedom and equality that will take hold after the passage of House Bill 248.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,

Emily Hayes

Wood County, Ohio