

Proponent Testimony on House Bill 248

Chairman Lipps and Members of the Health Committee,

My name is Michelle McAllister Krinsky and I am a Registered Nurse from Cincinnati, Ohio. Three and a half years ago in November of 2017 I was terminated for declining a flu shot. At that time I had been a RN for 35 years. 29 of those years at the same hospital in the same unit that I was terminated from. Because of my vegan ethics of non-harm and a prior adverse reaction to the flu shot, I submitted a conscientious/religious exemption in the fall of 2016. Halfway through “flu season” I was told my exemption was denied and that exemptions would no longer be accepted in my unit. At that time I was given an ultimatum to get the shot or be fired. I scheduled a meeting with my manager and nursing administration to explain my ethics and reasons for concern. I asked if I could wear a mask for the remainder of “flu season” which had always been hospital policy. I was told that this was no longer acceptable since masks did not adequately filter viral particulate. I asked to take a non paid leave of absence for the remaining two months but this was also denied. The choice was very clear – take the shot or be fired. There was no middle ground. I have always made my health a priority and eat an organic plant based diet. I’m very conscientious about environmental toxins. Get adequate exercise, sunshine, fresh air, and take the appropriate supplements to give my immune system extra support. I had never had the flu before. I rarely ever had colds even through the winter. In fact, I was one of the healthiest staff members in our unit. The fact that I was being forced to take this biological product was very distressing to me, but I felt I had no other choice. I love my job and financially we depended on my salary to help support my family. I was at the top of the pay scale. It was contributing to my retirement savings. Against my better judgment and inner intuition – I reluctantly took the injection. Five days after receiving the vaccine I woke with a high fever, body aches, chills, and a cough. I basically had the flu which then turned into bronchitis. I was off sick for two weeks. I was so frustrated that I was coerced into taking this shot that had made me ill. Someone who prided themselves with being well and proactive with their health.

Fast forward to October of 2017. Once again it was time to receive our flu shots. The staff was made aware that no exemptions would be honored. Take the shot or be terminated – period. I knew after two years of consecutive adverse reactions to this vaccine and along with a disregard to my ethics, I would not take this shot again. Another meeting was scheduled with my manager to no avail. There was no gray area. It was very black and white. On November 17, 2017 my position of 29 years was terminated. It didn’t matter that I had been an exemplary employee with an excellent work record. Not one medication error. Not one patient complaint in 29 years. I was known to be dependable and flexible. A kind, compassionate, and empathetic member of our team. Giving support to our families and my coworkers. This didn’t matter. All that matter was that I was not willing to comply with a mandatory policy that I was not comfortable with. Within a 24 hour period my nursing career, my income, my ability to save for my retirement, and my insurance benefits were gone. How is it okay that a hospital can take away your conscientious concerns, your ethical and religious rights to decline an injected

biological product. Why is it up to someone else to make those determinations? Why is NO not good enough? No, I do not feel comfortable with these potentially dangerous ingredients being injected into my body. No, my strongly held beliefs make me decline this product. None of this made sense to me for a product that has a 35-40% effectiveness rate on a good year. After doing a little research I quickly found this mandate had little to do with health and patient protection, but everything to do with employee compliance and Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement. Isn't it interesting how it always comes back to financial interest? If it was truly about health, nurses wouldn't be mandated to stay over our shifts to the point of exhaustion, we wouldn't be penalized if we were sick and had to call in, we would be encouraged to take beneficial supplements to support our immune system, and encourage and be provided with nutritional food and snacks, not the traveling candy cart with processed sugary snacks. The hospitals and the government never seem to promote health. They only want to push a pharma product that has nothing to do with health, but everything to do with a multibillion dollar vaccine agenda.

Honestly, I find it hard to believe that this discussion has to even be made about the Covid-19 injection. How can anyone force an injection that does not have FDA approval and is only being give under Emergency Use Authorization. A product that has absolutely no long term testing, no liability, and in the first five months according to the VAERS database on the CDC government site there have been over 4,000 deaths and over 200,000 adverse advents and injuries. This amount of risk for a virus that has a higher than 99% recovery rate in the general population. I have always been about choice and informed consent. I can tell you that true and informed consent is not being given. I can tell you this by being in the industry for 35 years. Turn on the evening news and all you hear is how wonderful this new shot is and how it is completely "safe and effective." Isn't it amazing how they leave out the details of all the people that have been injured or killed? I am only one healthcare worker that has been affected my mandated vaccines. After I was terminated, I received hundreds of messages and emails from nurses in similar positions. Not only in the USA, but in other countries as well. It is a really bad position to be placed in to have to pick your job or your ethics, your job or your religious values, and your job or your past medical adverse events. For me the loss of my job has caused a tremendous financial hardship for my family. We quickly went through my retirement savings to just maintain my home and bills that are going to be paid.

In conclusion, I am grateful for this much needed discussion. We need legislation that would support an individual's right to informed consent in the workplace. Whether or not to be vaccinated should remain an individual's right to bodily autonomy based on prior adverse reactions, religious convictions, ethical or conscientious concerns. When there is risk, there must always be a choice. Thank You.

Sincerely,
Michelle Krinsky

*This version may slightly be altered at in person testimony.