

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.

My name is Kathryn Nemanic and I am currently an Accounting Manager for a private company based in Cleveland, Ohio as well as a co-business owner and a former Respiratory Therapist for the US Army. The reason why I support House Bill 248 is because the company I work for as an Accounting Manager has recently sent out a mass communication to its employees, stating that after June 2nd, a discriminating policy will be in effect where those that choose against being vaccinated for COVID-19 will be required to wear facial-coverings while those that show proof of vaccination will not be required to wear them.

While it is my personal opinion that a vaccine is the best way to protect those that are considered high-risk or that have never been exposed to or have been formally diagnosed with Covid-19, I disagree with the need to vaccinate if you've already had a confirmed exposure and/or have been officially diagnosed with the virus. In both cases, the body has built the anti-bodies needed to provide future protection against additional exposure. So why would someone who already has successfully fought the virus need vaccination? I know many people who have recovered from Covid-19 that have chosen to still get vaccinated due to social pressure alone, when they don't have a medical need for it. Without laws to protect against vaccination discrimination, people will continue to seek medical treatments based solely on the fear of social repercussions and it is morally wrong for the Government to foster that type of environment.

My next point is that regardless of the reasoning, the choice to vaccinate should be a private one. The discriminating policies where unvaccinated employees will be required to wear facial-coverings makes their personal choice a very public one in the workplace. It essentially puts a scarlet letter on their chests and opens up the opportunity for negative judgement and treatment by others and further divides our communities rather than heals them.

Dr Fauci has publicly stated that the reasoning for encouraging unvaccinated people to continue to wear facial-coverings is to protect THEMSELVES because they are still vulnerable. This only makes sense for those that have not had the virus or have been exposed to it. This opens up the topic of our personal freedom of choice. If it doesn't hurt the vaccinated population, then why should the unvaccinated be ostracized by being forced to still wear coverings in the workplace? It is their choice to remain "vulnerable" and employers should NOT be afforded the opportunity to publicly and socially pressure their employees to vaccinate. Incentives are a great way for companies to encourage vaccination, but discrimination is a punishment and should be fought against, wholeheartedly.

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

Sincerely,

Kathryn Nemanic
Concerned Citizen