

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.

My name is Theresa Warren, and I am a mother and an Information Technology professional. The reason I support House Bill 248 is because no public or private institution, or person, should have the ability to compel me to submit to a medical intervention, whether a surgery, treatment, or vaccine. To do so is a violation of bodily autonomy and is against the Nuremburg Code. I am not against vaccination; however, vaccines do have risks, and their effectiveness is not guaranteed. We do not have a fair and robust scientific debate about this. It is alarming that scientists with concerns are suppressed and honest safety studies are not being performed. The only information permitted to be stated is along the lines of encouraging vaccination.

It is wrong to allow entities and places of public accommodation to discriminate against people because of their health care decisions. People should not be compelled to submit to a one size fits all approach to public health, which I believe is not in the best interests of the public. One big concern of mine is that vaccine providers have no liability for injuries caused by their products. No one is held accountable for the safety of vaccines, and far more effort is put into marketing and proselytizing for them than assuring their safety. It is unconscionable to mandate a product that has a risk of serious injury or death, and if the worst happens, the victim is left with no recourse. Should we require people to choose between being allowed to function in society, work, and participate in daily activities like shopping, travel, and entertainment, at the price of risking or sacrificing their health? Such a Faustian bargain should not be required in a free society.

The argument is often made that vaccination mandates or requirements are for the safety of others. If people believe a vaccine will protect them from illness, they should have the option to accept the intervention. If vaccines are effective, then they would be protected, and it should not be necessary to require everyone they may ever encounter to also accept the intervention. It is unrealistic to expect to eliminate all risks for all people at all times. Those at higher risk for a so-called vaccine preventable illness, who cannot be vaccinated, are able to take additional steps to protect themselves such as PPE and limiting exposure to public places. The risk reduction

effectiveness of vaccination must be balanced out by risks caused by vaccination itself, which are not trivial, and should not be imposed on people against their will at the cost of being able to participate in the economy and society.

One might think we could allow entities to require vaccines as long as they honor exemptions, but we should not default to a policy such as that. Exemptions make people jump through hoops to exercise their free will choices, and eventually become targeted for elimination. They imply the overall policy of allowing vaccine requirements is valid, which it is not, and that someone has the right to accept or decline your exemption. Many people found their mask wearing exemptions were not honored this past year.

Everyone should be permitted to weigh the risks and benefits of medical interventions for themselves and their families and make an informed decision without coercion; and also, be permitted to decline for any reason without penalty for their decision. I ask you to vote in favor of HB248, the Vaccine Choice and Anti-discrimination bill.

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

Sincerely,

Theresa A. Warren