

*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.*

This testimony is in support of individual autonomy and medical freedom provided under HB248.

My background:

PhD in Molecular Genetic, Biochemistry and Microbiology from University of Cincinnati College of Medicine.

12 years in research in genetics and genomics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital ending with the academic rank of faculty.

Director of Lab Operations at Assurex Health (now called Myriad Neuroscience), a genetic testing company in Mason, OH.

In the last year, we have seen overwhelming governmental authoritarianism and unchecked overreach. What would have been unthinkable 24 months ago became commonplace overnight. Mask mandates, entire adult civilian populations told to go to bed early (ie, curfews), business closures, lives and families destroyed, mental health issues climbing dramatically, deploying governmental agencies to crush opposition, businesses turning minimum wage workers into substitute and uncertified healthcare providers...the list goes on and on.

Government did some of the work, but they also enrolled, under threat of sanction, businesses to enforce these dreadful policies.

Now, we face the very real prospect, already coming into being, of citizens being forced to "show me your papers!" in order to go about normal life. The top of Ohio government is gleefully pushing a two-tiered system where, if you want basic human rights, you must get a pharmaceutical injection. The stated punishment for not getting it, or reward for getting it, make it impossible for this to be consensual as all medical care MUST be in order to be ethically performed.

This must never be allowed to happen.

It is unethical to require a medical procedure without consent. Consent can NOT be provided under duress. While we pretend that employers and stores aren't "forcing" people to act in certain ways to get jobs or shop, it is not reasonable to consider, "Do this or we will not hire you, you will lose \$100k/year, your family may be kicked onto the street" to be voluntary consent. If it is not voluntary, it is not consent. The stated punishment for not getting this injection, or reward for getting the injection, make it impossible for this to be consensual as all medical care MUST be in order to be ethically performed. The argument that people are consenting in this situation of coercion is no more legitimate than claiming that the woman who said 'yes' during a rape because the rapist had a gun to her head, actually provided consent.

The argument that forcing medical procedures on people, under the strong arm of government, is acceptable if it's for the "common good" is nonsensical. All rights MUST start with the individual since all members of society are individuals first. The USSR was famous for imposing tyranny "for the common good." I would propose that the USSR is not a good role model to follow.

This pharmaceutical injection is a medical intervention and can only morally be decided upon between a patient and doctor. Any outside influence is unacceptable. In fact, the unsubstantiated statements from the Ohio government and private businesses that this pharmaceutical injection is "safe and effective," should never have been allowed since these claims about a medical treatment are not proven. Where are the 5- and 10-year safety data? Where are the teratogenic data showing no damage to future generations? Is this the next Thalidomide being 'forced' upon an entire population? Nobody knows. To claim otherwise is to lie with the intent of influencing people to make a specific medical decision.

Obviously, I could go on for hours, yet there is not time for that right now.

Suffice it to say that based on my experience, understanding of medical and research ethics, understanding of rights as an American citizen, as a man who will "answer" to future generations when they ask, "Where were you when the tyrants were taking over"....I roundly reject any efforts to force medical procedures on an individual unless it is clearly demonstrated that it is beneficial for that specific individual and consent is freely given, without duress, and with complete information.

None of these rights are currently being protected, not do I believe these basic human rights will be protected unless through force of law.

Therefore, I support HB248 that provides these minimal protections that should never be required to be written into law. Sadly, our current circumstances have shown that they must be put into law in order to protect our most basic God-given rights as humans, the right to chose what to do with our own bodies.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Barnes, PhD