

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 Alyssa Ryan Calm and I am a mother, a wife, and an active participant in this community. I work as a Lactation Therapist supporting families with their breastfeeding challenges; this also allows me the space to assist families when they are in need of resources to help them make informed choices. The reason I support House Bill 248 is because I personally experienced a vaccine injury as a child. As a result of this injury, I was unable to receive further vaccines and have faced some challenges in remaining in school programs as a result, for example I was at risk of being ejected from my university program unless I updated my vaccines or provided documentation from my doctor as to why I could not be vaccinated. This was humiliating, having to prove my worthiness for higher education because I am physically unable to receive vaccines? No one should ever be made to feel that they don't deserve an education for any reason.

Because of my history of adverse vaccine reaction my husband and I have determined that it would be unsafe to receive the COVID-19 shot and have decided, based on our research, that it would be unwise and unsafe to vaccinate our children because of the increased risk of an adverse reaction. This is not information that we share lightly given the amount of divisiveness regarding vaccines.

Further, we believe in the sanctity of protecting one's medical information through HIPAA. Creating a system where a person is required to divulge such private and personal information is inappropriate, unethical, and morally corrupt. By communicating to citizens of this world that they are only able to participate in the world if they have received a vaccine is a travesty and is discrimination. It sends a message that people who choose not to receive this medical treatment are unworthy, somehow less than because they have determined that this medical treatment is not right for them. Requiring a vaccine passport encourages discrimination and segregation, things that people in this country have been fighting so hard against. This bill comes at a time when we should be bringing people together rather than continuing to divide us. Protecting people also means protecting their right to determine what medical treatments are suitable for them as individuals. You wouldn't expect a non-asthmatic person to use an inhaler so why would you encourage taking an experimental shot when it has shown that it is not right for everyone.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 248 so we can protect the rights of all people. Ensure that businesses and schools cannot deny access because they happen to have a different viewpoint.

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

Sincerely,

Alyssa Ryan Calm