

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 Byron Carson, and I'm the Director of Operations for a small sanitation company, a proud American and a concerned Ohioan, and the reason I support House Bill 248 is because Americans have the right to decide for themselves what medical treatments they wish to get. This is, at its core, a liberty issue.

"Compulsory vaccines" and "vaccine passports" are phrases I never thought I'd hear myself say in relation to the United States of America. "Paper's please." Our founders and the many soldiers who've fought and died for our great nation sacrificed to protect our way of life and our Constitutional Rights, which enable us, among other things, to choose to do what we feel is best for our own body.

I support personal responsibility and people making informed decisions for themselves. And I fully support people who decide (without outside pressure) to get vaccinated. I respect their choice. On the other hand, my decision to not get vaccinated should also be respected. No one (the government, my employer, my doctor, my grocery store) should not force me to get a vaccine (especially an untested and experimental one) in order to live my life freely.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm not anti-vaccination. I am, however, pro-constitutional rights and personal responsibility. I feel a great deal of stress over this issue and a great deal of pressure to "just get the shot." I am terrified and angry that people (maybe even me in the near future) are literally being told to get the vaccine or lose their jobs. This is not a choice. If you want to feed your family, you'll get the shot.

What's next? Doctors saying that you can't come into the office for care unless you're vaccinated? (That's already happening, by the way. My friend's mom was told the other day by the nurse at her primary care physician's office in Canton, Ohio, that if she hasn't gotten the vaccine, she can't be seen in person.) So by taking away people's choices, we are forcing them to get vaccinated, aren't we? Discriminatory treatment of citizens based on their vaccination status is already happening.

This legislation is vital — not only to preserve people's choices around this vaccine, but to preserve our way of life.

God bless you all, our great state of Ohio and our great nation. Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,
Byron Carson