

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and all other members of the House Health Committee,

First of all, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248. I work in a small family owned business and I am a father of 3 young children. Our family is very careful about what we put into our bodies. We eat very clean and very rarely take any kind of over-the-counter or prescription medications. I had a serious back injury in college and have had complications ever since then, which has made me even more cautious when it comes to my health. I am not comfortable with the lack of long-term research on any of the current COVID vaccines and I am concerned about the effect they could possibly have on my short or long-term health. I believe the decision about whether or not to get the vaccine should be a personal, one that I believe that I should be able to make for myself without fear of discrimination at my place of employment or any other places in my community.

HB 248 is very important to me. As a small business owner, I understand how COVID has impacted small businesses and we rely on our relationships with other businesses and fear that discrimination for not getting the vaccine could impact our income that supports my family. I wholeheartedly believe that any medication or medical procedure should be done with full informed consent and left up to each individual person as a risk versus benefits analysis that is a very personal decision. I am responsible first and foremost for my health and the health of my family and any repercussions from my employer or pressure from other businesses who may or may not require proof of vaccination is unconstitutional and discriminatory. I also should never have to disclose my "status" or personal health issues to anyone as justification for why I am making this personal health decision.

Thank you for your urgency in this matter and for standing up for the many, many Ohioans who are concerned that they will be discriminated against for making a personal choice about what goes into their bodies. Please pass HB 248 quickly as this will impact my family and many other small business owners like us.