

May 23rd, 2021

Dear Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and honorable Members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Julianne Kempf and I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248, Vaccine Choice & Anti-Discrimination Act. Today, I kindly ask that you vote yes on HB248. This is a bill that would protect our most basic human rights. Vaccines come with risks, just like any other medical procedure. It is important to lay out the pros and cons of vaccines, just like you would for any other medical procedure, and determine what is best for you and your own body. That is no one else's choice to make but your own. People choose to decline vaccines, like the COVID-19 vaccine, for conscientious, religious, or medical reasons. Without bills like this, these personal choice exemptions would be stripped away. If this happens, I fear a class system will form where segregation and discrimination will grow rapidly in the communities that we love.

The discrimination I am already seeing in the workplace is alarming. I am a Microbiologist at a fortune 500 company that has always preached zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, & harassment, and always promotes inclusion. It's a company that I love and that I have always felt safe working for. But recently I have seen emails going around calling the unvaccinated "selfish & stupid", and "we wish we could determine who is vaccinated versus unvaccinated by seeing their papers". Everyone should feel safe and protected in their workplace, and I fear that if bills like this don't pass, there will no longer be medical privacy, which could lead to fear, separation, hateful behavior, and discrimination in the workplace.

Instead of spreading fear, why aren't there more people spreading knowledge about health & nutrition, exercise & lifestyle choices. Educating people on comorbid conditions that put people at greater risk for illnesses such as CODIV-19. Instead, people are led to believe that the only way they can protect themselves from illnesses, such as COVID-19 is with a vaccine. This fear is misleading people, and causing hateful behavior and discrimination towards those who choose not to get vaccinated.

I urge you to please protect Ohio citizens and their freedom of choice. Please vote yes on HB248, protecting Ohio citizens from segregation and discrimination, and allow us to keep our medical freedom.

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

Sincerely,
Julianne Kempf