

May 31, 2021

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. I am asking to amend my previous testimony due to a change of course by my employer. My school district previously indicated they would continue to follow CDC guidelines and require unvaccinated staff and students to continue to wear masks. Thankfully, an email on May 27 indicated that they have decided to make masks optional for students and staff beginning June 2, 2021.

I support HB248 because without the choice to mask or not mask, get the shot or not get the shot, people like me will be excluded from parts of normal daily life. The last 14 months have been a nightmare filled with conflict and discrimination every single day. I can't wear a mask and I do not want the vaccine. For the last year and a half I have had to psych myself up to go to public places. I never knew which stores would question my bare face. I've cancelled preventative health care because I don't know if the medical offices will see me without cloth over my face. My former primary care doctor of over 10 years wrote me an exemption from cloth masks. When I went for a followup exam wearing a face shield, they told me to leave the building because I refused to put cloth over my face. Several days later, they sent me a certified letter ending my care with their office.

This nightmare could continue with the real possibility of businesses and medical practices requiring everyone to be vaccinated in order to enter the office. I am afraid I will have to forgo medical care because I refuse to get the shot. We have seen unprecedented coercion and bribery to entice people to get this still experimental shot. In July of 2020, Yale University began a study to find the most effective messages to get people to take the Covid-19 vaccine. Here are the different messages they were studying:

1. General Benefits of being vaccinated.
2. Get the vaccine to regain your freedom
3. Get a vaccination to regain economic freedom.
4. You are in danger if you don't get the vaccine.
5. Get the vaccine so you don't endanger loved ones.
6. The economy is in danger if everyone doesn't get vaccinated.
7. Guilt. How do you feel spreading this disease?
8. Embarrassment. Won't you be embarrassed if you spread the disease?
9. Science. If you don't get a vaccine you don't believe in science.
10. Bravery. You are not brave like frontline workers if you don't get a vaccine.

( <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/study/NCT04460703> )

Looks like message number 5 was the winner. Why would a study like this be necessary for a virus that is a risk only to the elderly or sick population? If people are truly at risk of succumbing to this disease, the possibility of death should be motivation enough, but in reality, the possibility of death is very low for most people. Aside from the conspiracy theories that do exist out there, this kind of propaganda only serves to make people more suspicious of the reason for pushing the Covid-19 vaccine.

Several businesses and hospitals are already mandating the vaccine for employees, even while it is in emergency use authorization status with the FDA. There is no doubt those requirements will be challenged, but what happens when the vaccine does get final approval from the FDA. Are we as citizens of the United States supposed to just accept that the vaccine is now safe enough for everyone to take or lose our rights to health choices? Just accept that we have to take it even though there are certainly risks to some of the population? Just take the vaccine that has been studied for a much shorter period of time than any other vaccine in history? If you don't take a mandated vaccine you become a second class citizen with less rights. The airline industry has taken away my ability to fly and visit relatives where driving is not practical. I am not allowed to fly without a mask. Trust in government and medical science is already low because of the way this pandemic was handled and I am not ready to get this vaccine...right now. Doctors are already beginning to ask patients for permission to share their medical records with the state in order to build a database of people who had the vaccine and by default, those who have not.

Your vote to make HB248 law is very important to protect an individual's choice to take or not take vaccines. HB248 has the added benefit of preventing individuals from having to wear masks that do cause serious medical consequences for me and many others. It's time to treat people as the free individuals that they are and stop government and corporations from ever meddling in our personal health choices again.

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