

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and distinguished members of the House Health Committee:

My name is Josiah Lanning. I stand before you here today as a lifelong resident of the State of Ohio, and a strong proponent of House Bill 248.

Unlike previous expert witnesses, my area of expertise is not in medicine or virology. Rather, I am a subject matter expert on both public policy and COVID discrimination. In 2019, I became one of the first individuals in a wheelchair to graduate from the John Glenn College of Public Affairs with a Master degree in Public Administration. Through our brief time to discuss this vital piece of legislation, my hope is to provide this committee with an alternative perspective as it relates to Ohio's COVID public health response, including the systematic persecution of both minorities and individual thought.

### **History**

Since April 2020, 11 million Ohioans, including those with a wide range of disabilities, have been subjected to some variation of a mask order.<sup>i</sup> At the onset, masks were promoted as a path to both “flatten the curve” and return to normal.<sup>ii</sup> Our airways were bombarded with mask propaganda campaigns such as “don your mask, wear your cape,” #MaskUpOhio and #InThisTogetherOhio. These campaigns served as societal wedges which have isolated people whom are unable to mask, framing non-maskers as those who are to blame for the delayed return to normalcy. Threats of fines and jail time as well as the evolution of a policy recommendation into a requirement have only added to the societal isolation and demonization of non-maskers.<sup>iii</sup> ***Utilizing the societal environment created by an unprecedented yearlong campaign of fear and misinformation, our state's leading health administrators have been empowered to create public policy which has served to erase over a century of civil rights advancement through the reestablishment of both societal segregation and discrimination. Medical Jim Crow.***

### **Segregation Reborn**

Following the end of the Reconstruction Era, *Plessy v. Ferguson* laid the legal foundations for the policy doctrine known as “separate-but-equal.” The policies which would follow this monumental interpretation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment governed segregation policies which were used to marginalize otherwise equal citizens.<sup>iv</sup> Southern states developed black codes which differentiated and regulated the activities and behavior of black citizens from those of whites.<sup>v</sup> Nearly every aspect of life was affected including healthcare, housing, transportation, societal activities, employment, and equality under the law.

After nearly a year of Ohio's oppressive mask mandate, many corporations throughout Ohio have now incorporated masking into their policy, barring non-maskers from entering their establishments. This is reminiscent of the repulsive “whites only” policies which dominated the South for decades. Businesses that have taken steps to enforce curbside service have allowed payment while requiring citizens to wait outside in the extremes of Ohio weather. Acceptance of payment while requiring those who seek service to wait outside is reminiscent of “Yer kind ain't welcome here. If you want service, you can pick it up 'round back.” ***Let me make something very clear – the enforcement of segregated service based a mask or an injection is no different than the service given to black citizens following the Reconstruction Era.*** “No mask, no service, no exemptions” and “As long as you are unable to wear a mask, you are not allowed

inside” are phrases I hear all too often. Soon, without intervention, many Ohioans will hear “no vaccine, no (job/service/good), no exemptions.” *Separate-but-equal*.

Last summer, activist organizations and protestors from all walks of life brought communities throughout America to a halt as a united demonstration against racial injustice. Businesses throughout Ohio stood together in solidarity with protestors against segregated policing practices. However, many of the same people who have claimed to oppose segregation for one group have been perpetrators of medical and intellectual segregation of other groups. *My life matters just as much as anyone else in this state* yet I have been harassed and demonized as well as societally and economically isolated. Dr. Martin Luther King famously said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” yet there is no one outside the Statehouse protesting for non-maskers who have been unjustly treated. No one is outside chanting “say his name” nor is the hashtag #JusticeforJosiah trending on social media. *Societal equality has been all but erased as no one cares about exemptions or seemingly even the notion of individual rights. Health administrators have arguably done more damage to the societal wellbeing of Ohio than COVID through their recreation of moral and medical supremacy.*

While I understand some of my statements thus far may be viewed as extreme; *I am your canary in the coal mine*. For over a century, politically empowered health administrators have systematically targeted those deemed societally expendable (minority populations, physically/mentally challenged, conscientious objectors) as a part of their vile public health policy of eugenics.<sup>vi</sup> Yes, times may have changed. However, practices have remained the same as *public health administrators have contemplated forcibly removing those deemed “infected” from their homes so that they could be “properly quarantined.”*<sup>vii</sup> In the name of public health, we have injected masses of elderly and disabled (many without cognitive ability to understand) with an untested, unproven, emergency use authorization injection. *Yes, morally degenerate health administrators are using blacks, the elderly and the disabled as primary test subjects just like totalitarian governments buried in world history.*

### Conclusion

Under the guise of public health emergency, Ohioans have suffered through egregious abuses of power as health administrators have established medical Jim Crow. Demonized. Ostracized. Persecuted. Make no mistake, many of the same businesses Ohio empowered to enforce their hideous mask mandates have now become the unofficial tactic utilized for injection coercion. *For politically empowered health administrators, the COVID public health emergency and its associated fear campaign have served as the perfect vehicle to implement a global health system by which no man can buy or sell without compliance.*<sup>viii</sup> *Under no circumstances should my right to work, shop, or engage in commerce be tied to whether or not I engaged in a government sanctioned activity. Through House Bill 248, this committee and the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly can reaffirm the foundational principle that all men are created equal and societal segregation and discrimination, regardless of its form, has no place in the State of Ohio.* Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Josiah Lanning

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- <sup>i</sup> Axelrod, B. (2020, April 28). *Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine: Wearing Masks Will Now Be Recommended, Not Mandated*. Retrieved from <https://www.wkyc.com/article/news/local/ohio/ohio-gov-mike-dewine-wearing-masks-will-now-be-recommended-not-mandated/95-584521f4-0011-4495-82d6-3a16ab2d3391>
- <sup>ii</sup> Jordan, F. (2020, April 14). *DeWine: 'When we do open again, it's going to be different'*. Retrieved from <https://www.wcpo.com/live-gov-dewines-daily-update-on-covid-19-in-ohio>
- <sup>iii</sup> Rosenberg, G. (2020, July 22). *Ohio Requiring Facemasks Statewide, Gov. Mike DeWine Announces*. Retrieved from <https://news.wosu.org/news/2020-07-22/ohio-requiring-face-masks-statewide-gov-mike-dewine-announces>
- <sup>iv</sup> Gilkis, K. (2018, October). *Separate But Equal: Plessy v. Ferguson*. Retrieved from [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/separate\\_but\\_equal](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/separate_but_equal)
- <sup>v</sup> History Online Authors. (2018, February 28). *Jim Crow Laws*. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/jim-crow-laws>
- <sup>vi</sup> Grodin, M. A., Miller, E. L., & Kelly, J. I. (2018, January). *The Nazi Physicians as Leaders in Eugenics and "Euthanasia": Lessons for Today*. *American Journal of Public Health*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5719686/>
- <sup>vii</sup> Caplan, J. (2020, April 7). *Coronavirus: WHO Official Floats Removing the Infected from Their Homes*. *Breitbart*. <https://www.breitbart.com/health/2020/04/07/coronavirus-who-official-floats-removing-the-infected-from-their-homes-to-stop-spread>
- <sup>viii</sup> McManus, D. (2021, April 11). *No Shoes, No Shot, No Service. Why Vaccine 'Passports' are a Good Idea*. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2021-04-11/vaccine-passports-republicans-covid-19-pandemic>