

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248.

My name is Celeste Massullo and I am a business owner, wife and mother. I support House Bill 248 because I am a firm believer that choices concerning our body should remain just that, our own choice. There is nothing more sacred than our body and the freedom to choose what we do with it and put into it. It is a liberty that must never be taken away. I firmly believe this is a right endowed by our creator and no person, government, institution, organization or employer has the authority to take that away. We should not be coerced or blackmailed into altering our person, for the sake of employment, education, traveling, dining, and functioning in a free society. One should not be treated with a different set of standards because of a private medical decision made concerning their own body. Unfortunately, we are beginning to see that unfold in our state and country.

When we first went into lockdown in March of 2020 I was very concerned, especially as a parent. To ease my children's fears, I told them, Covid-19 appears only to be fatal to the elderly and people with underlying health conditions, and that even if you were to contract the virus, at your age, you would not die. Well, that turned out to be correct. According to the CDC website, there have only been 295 deaths solely attributed to Covid-19, in children ages 0-17 in the entire United States and 0 deaths in Ohio, from the months of January 1, 2020 through May 15, 2021. Now that needs to sink in, since the recent Emergency Use Authorization of Covid-19 vaccines has now been extended to 12 year old children. Clinical phase 1 and 2 trials have begun on children as young as 5 years old and there is talk about not stopping there and proceeding with infants. This decision to vaccinate this age group for Covid-19 flies in the face of logic and reason. We know they have almost no risk, and in fact, in Ohio, zero risk of dying, as proven by the last 18 months of data from the CDC. Yet the risk level is unknown for long term side effects from this current Covid-19 vaccine trial. Covid-19 injections have been authorized for emergency use only and not been approved or licensed by the FDA.

According to the CDC website, in the United States, individuals ages 18-29, from the time period of January 1, 2020 to May 15, 2021, there has been a total of 2,204 Covid deaths and in Ohio a mere 32 deaths. I am not minimizing the loss of life, because all life is precious and I believe, a gift from God. Yet this age group, has more of a chance of dying in a motor vehicle accident than from Covid, according to CDC data from 2019.

May 20th, I received an email from my student's college. They are not requiring the vaccine, however, they are requiring the mask indoors regardless of vaccine status. But the fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear a mask while outdoors. The email goes on to say and I quote: "In addition, students were recently sent an email asking them to voluntarily share their COVID-19 vaccination records with the university. By sharing this information, fully vaccinated students will be subject to more relaxed requirements compared to unvaccinated students, such as less frequent testing and adjustments to quarantine requirements if identified as a close contact."

This amounts to a student, being treated differently than another, based on medical status. Is this not a form of discrimination? Is this not creating division among their peers, when they espouse acceptance and inclusion for all at the university?

Under the current Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA, Covid-19 vaccines cannot be required in accordance with federal law, either can a Covid test or a mask. Under emergency authorization an individual has the right to refuse or accept these offers under federal law. When a university or employer uses language, like "requirement", that conveys no choice. In fact, Webster's dictionary defines requirement as an essential, must-have, demand. If they are doing this while these medical recommendations are still in emergency authorization, I can only predict, if the Covid-19 injections are approved, then our students will have no choice when it comes to medical vaccinations, regardless of their risk of mortality.

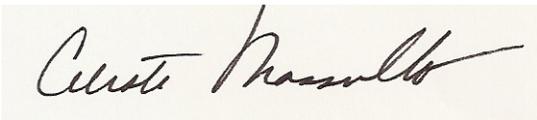
We need to pass HB248 to halt discrimination based on medical status that already exists and is growing in our universities, institutions and businesses. We must preserve the freedom of an individual, parent or guardian to choose what medical procedures will be conducted on their person or child's body without fear of retaliation, in the form of limited access to worship, shop, work or go to school in person.

If we have learned nothing else through this entire pandemic, it has been that the rights we have always enjoyed as Americans, can be restricted by government officials, in the name of emergency. They went so far as to tell us whose work is essential and whose is not. We have learned that science is not exact and opinions and approaches vary in medicine. The masking issue is a perfect example of this difference. We have been told wearing a mask is needed for protection. Some scientist say it is unhealthy. Others say a mask won't stop the spread because the virus particles are too small and can get through the mask, so don't bother. We have also been told we needed 2

masks because that is the best protection. We have learned that some physicians approach a virus using therapeutics, some vitamins and lifestyle changes and others with vaccines. Just like no 2 snowflakes are the same, no 2 persons bodies are the same, and what may work for one, may have adverse effects for another. In relation to a vaccine though, it cannot be removed from your body and has on-going effects. This makes it even more critical, that all vaccines remain a choice, no matter what is going on in the world.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony for the urgent need for House Bill 248 for vaccine choice and non-discrimination based on medical status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light beige background. The signature is cursive and reads "Celeste Massullo".

Celeste Massullo

Attachments:

- Data from CDC May 19, 2020
- Ranking Cause of Death CDC 2019
- Ohio State University family email