

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.

My name is Karla Murray and I am a voter, homeowner, taxpayer, and lifelong Ohio citizen who works as a County Engineer's Contract Clerk. I strongly support House Bill 248 because I firmly believe that every Ohio citizen deserves the right of freedom of choice for their own health and what is injected into their body.

Through several severe health issues that have almost taken my life, I have learned the hard way that the medical community doesn't always know what is best for an individual and often puts everyone into stereotypical boxes that jeopardize our health rather than nurture it. It is the same with vaccines of all types. There are many for whom vaccines would be deadly or cause physical harm, others who are concerned about injecting foreign substances into their bodies. Whatever the reason, each should have the right to make their own choice to take or refuse any vaccine. The State does not own us – the citizens own the State.

Throughout this time of mask orders, I have been harassed and discriminated against for not wearing a mask. A choice I made to protect my health because I know my body better than anyone else. It has been a violation of my privacy to be required to explain why I am claiming an exemption included in the Health Director & Governor's mandates. There are also businesses that have ignored the exemptions, only enforcing the masking part of the mandate, and refused to allow me to purchase necessary goods unless I put my health at risk. Without House Bill 248, this discrimination will be permitted to run rampant.

Locally, there is at least one government entity that has made a policy to refuse entry to its own citizens if they do not disclose whether or not they have received the Covid 19 shot. This discrimination is equal to that of the Nazis.

Businesses and government entities should be permitted to suggest vaccines, but not to coerce, threaten, force, refuse service, demote, refuse raises, or fire anyone choosing to exercise their freedom of choice. House Bill 248 protects the freedom of every Ohio citizen to make their own choice of whether or not to have a vaccine enter their body.

It is extremely important to me that this bill maintain that freedom in both the private and public sectors. It is also key that this legislation protect an individual's right to privacy and prohibit others from requesting vaccination status.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248. I urge you to vote to advance this bill as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Karla Murray