

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 William Presson, and I am an Information Technology Systems Analyst at a Columbus hospital. My testimony and viewpoints are not representative of my employer.

In recent months, there has been an increase of authoritarian ideas like mandatory vaccines, and vaccine passports. As these ideas have increased in popularity with certain individuals on the far left, those like myself that oppose mandatory vaccines and vaccine passports, are being labeled as “anti-vaccine.” I am here to here to tell you that this is simply not the case.

I am in no way an “anti-vaxxer.” I think vaccines play an extremely critical role in modern society. They can be attributed to limiting outbreaks of deadly infectious diseases. Whether a person receives a vaccine or not, is between that individual and their primary care provider. Ultimately, the decision should be made by the individual, not government, and most definitely not the media, and radical individuals that are pushing for mandatory vaccines. Every year at work, I am given the option to take the flu vaccine, or sign a waiver, and choose not to get the flu vaccine. If I choose to not get the annual flu vaccine, I am not shunned from society, and I’m not required to provide my “papers” to show that I’m vaccinated. I’m not required to scan my barcode at the door before entry to a store. I’m not required to wear a mask to see my family members. I’m not prevented from having a party at my home. I’m simply exercising my individual right to medical freedom, and choose not to get vaccinated. In doing so, I willingly accept the risks of getting the flu, which I have gotten in the past, after being vaccinated, and after not being vaccinated. Individuals should maintain their right to choose whether they receive vaccines, whether it be the flu vaccine, or the Covid-19 vaccine, that’s only EAU approved by the FDA. It’s unethical and irresponsible to even consider mandating a vaccine that’s not even FDA approved with placebo testing, which the current Covid-19 vaccine does not have.

Lastly, I want to touch on what I find more concerning, and that’s an individual’s right to privacy. Americans, and more specifically, Ohioans, are at risk to having their medical information privacy violated. Every year, I complete mandatory HIPAA training. In short, HIPAA prevents healthcare professionals, like me, from sharing private health information without a patient’s permission. Healthcare professionals are held to an extremely high standard when it comes to protecting private health information, but we are on the verge of compromising that information by forcing individuals to share their immunization history with private, and public entities, just to participate in public events, shop at a store, eat a restaurant, or watch a sporting event. A mandatory vaccine passport would require individuals to create an association between the Health Information System at their hospital or primary care provider, and a 3rd party or government application and database. As I’ve worked in the Information Technology field for quite some time, I can assure you that this creates more opportunities for individual information to be compromised. This is not only unethical to require individuals to prove their immunization records, it’s irresponsible for us to put individual’s private information at risk by creating more vulnerabilities. If we are going to require individuals to prove their immunization for a certain virus or disease, we might as well give small gold stars to the un-vaccinated, like myself, because if we are going to practice authoritarian, communist practices, we should at least do it like the real authoritarians did in Germany during the 1940’s.

There are many other things I could cover and talk about, but I don’t think it’s necessary, and I’m sure my fellow Ohioans will touch on these points in their testimonies. I am 100% certain that HB248 is necessary for

Ohioans to remain free, and maintain their right to privacy, and the right to make their own decisions regarding their healthcare.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248, and I urge you all to vote yes on this bill.