

May 23, 2021

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

My name is Marcia Reichard. I am cashier for a workplace that was permitted to remain open throughout the COVID-19 closures, due to the “essential” services that are offered. Friday, May 21, I was notified when I started my shift that employees who had received the full COVID-19 injections, would no longer have to wear a mask. However, non –vaccinated employees or employees who prefer not to answer their vaccination status must continue to wear face covering in all settings, per CDC guidance and company specific guidelines. Employees were strongly encouraged to take advantage of COVID-19 vaccination opportunities.

Initially, I feel it is my choice to decide which medical procedures I wish to participate, especially, when it comes to injecting ingredients into my body. My body is not the property of the company that employs me. However, the individual who chooses not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine or prefers not to comment on their status must still wear a mask. I am concerned how this outward symbol will lead to discrimination in the workplace, and within the community. Visible symbols lend themselves to opening the door for negative and discriminatory attitudes and actions towards individuals.

Secondly, this concerns me by the need for a company to know my personal medical conditions, and/or records, even if seen only by select members of the company. There has been no concern for my medical well-being during my shifts when being required to wear a mask, and the ill effects I’ve experienced. I am very concern for the day when the policy will change requiring all employees to receive a vaccination or risk losing their employment.

Finally, I’ve heard concern that it is a business’s responsibility, mainly resulting in implementation by employees, to protect its customers from COVID-19. Hasn’t this already been occurring? Customers have the CHOICE to go into the store, have someone else shop for them, curbside delivery, drive-thru, and home delivery options. If a customer is concerned whether their cashier is vaccinated or not, there are options available that would remove the contact with a cashier or other employees.

I support House Bill 248 because employee should not have to be concerned for their employment or be singled out due to a particular medical status.

Thank you allowing my testimony to be submitted in reference to the need and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,

Marcia Reichard