

Testimony of Nichole Short RN, BSN, IBCLC  
Support HB248  
House Health Committee  
May 23, 2021

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

My name is Nichole Short. I am an RN, IBCLC and mother of three children. I've worked in healthcare for over 10 years and still currently work in the inpatient hospital care setting. As a healthcare worker I abide by informed consent without coercion. I want to make healthcare decisions for myself and family and I want them to remain private and this is why I am in support of HB 248.

Just this last week the Superintendent, of our school district, sent out an email stating, after June 3rd anyone visiting the campus for activities or events who were 12 years and older and fully vaccinated wouldn't be required to wear a mask but anyone unvaccinated would still be required to wear a mask. Not only is this decision not supported by the current science it defies what the manufacturers themselves are telling us about this vaccine. This is inadvertently sharing an individual's medical information. It also creates an atmosphere of discrimination and a lesser class.

My employer has yet to require the vaccine but I can only imagine it's coming. As a healthcare worker I am required to get an influenza vaccination yearly unless I qualify for a medical or religious exemption. If an employee doesn't qualify they are written up and lose their yearly raise for non-compliance. Employees who opt out of the vaccine are required to wear a mask the entire influenza season; a punitive mark under the guise of protecting others and ourselves. This will likely be the case with COVID-19 vaccination as well.

I ask that you please vote in favor of HB 248 to ensure that medical decisions remain in the hands of the individual, free from coercion and discrimination. Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

With care and concern,  
Nichole Short RN, BSN, IBCLC