

May 30th, 2021

House Health Committee

Dear Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo and the House Health Committee,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my testimony in Support of Sub House Bill 248.

My name is Shannon Wintheiser and I am a mom, Holistic Health Coach, and former data analyst/statistical modeler for 7 years. I graduated cum laude from Miami University with a Bachelor's in Economics. I have spent the better part of a decade researching health and wellness as well as the role that pharmaceutical companies, food companies, and government health agencies like the CDC and FDA play in shaping and influencing health policy in this country. This is not a passion or endeavor that I "chose" per se —as is the case for many hundreds of thousands in this country (or more) and millions around the world, the quest for true health chose me.

Representative Gross has said that this is a freedom bill. I agree, and one of the most important freedoms that we have as Americans is health freedom. My story is not unique to me - as a health coach I have practiced at a gynecologist and also independently, and I have seen many many many patients with stories similar to mine. People suffering with chronic-type illnesses, with no diagnoses or effective treatment, despite doing what I call "the journey of 1000 doctors". Personally, when I started to have widespread health problems in my early 20s, I saw so many doctors and specialists I lost track. None were able to give me a diagnosis, let alone help me heal. My symptoms got progressively worse after I took three vaccines prior to a trip to South Africa in 2009 (and passed out on the spot for the first and only time in my life). In 2012 I decided to take matters in to my own hands.

I decided to start researching holistic health. I went gluten free, went back to school for integrative nutrition coaching, and learned so much about food, supplementation, and the body. I experienced some symptom relief, but it wasn't enough to save me from the effects of sustaining a pregnancy.

After the birth of my first daughter in 2015, my health hit an all-time low. I couldn't stand in one place for more than about 30 seconds at a time. I remember being at the grocery, wearing her on my front, and thinking that I was going to pass out (one of my symptoms at the time was POTS - postural orthostatic tachycardia). I remember thinking to myself in that moment "fall backward so you don't crush her."

At that point I knew I had to do something to get my life back. So that I could play with my daughter, and take her to the park, and run around the yard with her. So that I could go on dates (and one of my favorite pastimes, music concerts) with my husband without having to save up energy all week. I left the traditional allopathic medicine world, and started searching for functional and integrative doctors. In 2017 I found one that I knew was going to be able to help me. And after urine tests, stool tests, blood tests, hair tests, and a long road of protocols,

he did. I'm happy to say that now, 4 years later, I can do many things in a day without needing to sleep or rest: I can go to the grocery, cook food, take my daughters to the park, hang out with neighbors, and feel *great!!* For most people that might seem normal or ordinary, but for me - that is a miracle. It is extraordinary.

I got my life back, and am healed today, because of HEALTH FREEDOMS that we have historically been given in this country:

I had the *freedom* to find a doctor that could actually help me.

I had the *freedom* to choose whether or not to take medication for severe postpartum anxiety (in this case I did take medication, because I weighed the cost/benefits at that point and that was the conclusion I came to. Of my own free will.)

I have the *freedom* to take supplements to improve mine and my family's health and to make up for the incredible nutrient deficiencies in our food supply due to industrial farming practices.

I have the *freedom* to choose organic and non-GMO foods for my family and not ingest the now known carcinogen, glyphosate, that is still being sprayed on crops all over this country despite being banned in other countries and in all of Europe by 2022.

I have the *freedom* to choose personal care products for my family free of phthalates, and parabens and other hormone-disrupting toxins.

I have the *freedom* to buy water filters so that we can filter out unwanted elements like chlorine from the water we drink.

I could go on. I'm like the canary in a coal mine - if something is even remotely unhealthy, or inflammatory, my body will recognize it as such. It's a blessing and a curse. And, if you can't tell, health is religion at my home and in the homes of so many I know and have met along my journey. So after all this — after spending thousands of dollars, more than 10 years of researching, and working to heal — after all this, you're going to tell me and others like me that we can choose to eat organic and make thousands of other carefully-thought out decisions to protect our fragile health, but we can't choose whether we get injected with a biologic that has an amount of risk attached to it, in order to be employed? Or enter certain buildings? Or attend a music concert? It's not like we're injecting saline here (and even if we were, that should *still* be a choice). These biologics (any of them — not just the Covid-19 EUA injectable) are *not* without risk and anyone who tells you so is either lying, or has not done their research.

I won't accept that. I fought so hard for my life — to have a full and healthy life, and I will fight for the rest of my life to defend my children's health and to ensure they never have to go through what I went through.

This IS a freedom bill. This is a health freedom bill. And as someone who once didn't have my health, I can't tell you how much it means to me now. They say if you don't have health, you have nothing. Telling people they have to inject anything into their bodies, or take a pill, or eat certain things, in order to participate in society isn't freedom. And it's a slippery slope. Please support sub HB 248 so we can all maintain the right to have these health freedoms.

Thank you,

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