

June 12, 2021

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

My name is Lynn Buffington. I urge you to oppose HB 248.

I was born in 1952, the worse year of polio infection in the United States. During that year 60,000 children were infected and over 3,000 died. My family was very close with the families of my father's four brothers' families who lived near us. My Uncle Henry's family was greatly affected. His wife, my Aunt Connie, and my cousin and playmate Trey who was my same age, both contracted polio. Trey was very ill, but completely recovered while my Aunt Connie permanently lost almost all the strength in one arm. This was very difficult for her as she raised a family of four boys and one girl. In this context, it is no surprise that, even though I was very young, I remember the jubilation and celebration from my parents and grandparents when the vaccination for polio became available. It would be inconceivable to my late parents and grandparents that elected representatives of the people would even consider a law that would drastically decrease vaccination rates and furthermore, take away the right of employers to decide to require vaccinations. Please do not do this. Especially egregious is the provision of HB 248 that would prohibit day cares and nursing homes from requiring vaccinations.

I have friends and relatives in other states and they are shocked that Ohio would consider this bill. Please do not make Ohio an embarrassment, and, more importantly, do not make Ohio a state of self-inflicted increased infectious disease. We do not want the suffering and we do not want the financial losses of sickness and disability.

I urge you to vote no on HB 248. Thank you for your time.