

HB 248: To Prohibit Required Vaccination Status
Opponent Testimony: [NAME]
Ohio House Health Committee
June 15, 2021

Chairman Lipps, Vice-Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo and Members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Gregory Lam and I am a cardiologist who practices in Circleville. I am here today to testify in opposition to HB 248.

For over a year now I have taken care of COVID19 patients and have seen first-hand the devastation from this deadly disease. I'll never forget the critically ill patients in the ICU, some hooked up to ventilators desperately struggling to breath, drowning from the fluid in their lungs. Or the 18 year old woman who nearly died from a massive blood clot in her lungs.

Many of my patients have died. One of my families was heartbroken after having to goodbye to their dying father through a glass door. They were enraged not only because their dad's death was preventable, but because they couldn't comfort him in his dying moments, hold his hand, kiss him and tell him that they love him. They are forever haunted by this memory.

Another one of my patients thought COVID19 was a hoax and didn't believe in the vaccine. He contracted the virus and became severely sick, but he survived. Unfortunately, he infected his co-worker who died from COVID complications. He's now riddled with guilt and states that he wished he never believed the lies about the coronavirus - how it's no worse then the flu, or how the vaccine doesn't work. He told me that he wished he had gotten vaccinated.

The COVID19 vaccines saves lives. It protects my patients. It protects your families. It makes our communities healthier. And it's our best hope for return back to normalcy.

HB248 jeopardies this. More significantly, it jeopardizes the lives of those who can't get vaccinated. This includes my 11 year old son who was diagnosed with pediatric neutropenia and is susceptible to infections. My wife and I have done everything possible to keep him safe but he could die because someone at school chose not to get vaccinated and was not required to wear a mask. How is this not a violation of my son's rights or of his freedoms?

But HB 248 does much more than prevent mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations, it would apply to ALL vaccinations. This bill would decimate our progress in public health in the past century for polio, measles, mumps, rubella, meningitis, and HPV. Passage of this bill will undoubtably kill Ohioans.

This isn't a political issue – viruses don't care if you're a democrat or a republican. This is simply a public health issue. It's no different than prohibiting people from smoking in airplanes or requiring people to use seatbelts.

Thank you for listening to the concerns of a public servant and a worried parent. To keep Ohioans safe, I humbly urge the committee to reject HB 248.