

HB 248: Enact Vaccine Choice and Anti-Discrimination Act
Proponent Testimony: Conrad Lindes, M.D.
Ohio House Health Committee
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I appreciate the opportunity to provide PROponent testimony on House Bill 248. This legislation has been carefully crafted to maintain current requirements for childhood immunizations, which immunizations have been thoroughly tested and fully approved by the FDA. The immediate purpose and result of this bill would be to prevent governmental mandates or the use of coercion by anyone to force individuals to accept immunization against Covid-19 as well as possible future immunizations which have been rushed through the testing process and remain experimental according to the FDA.

I do not diminish the harm that the Covid-19 virus has caused to those whom it has infected. However, many of the public health interventions taken to quell spread of that disease have caused their own harms – increased suicides, drug use and overdoses, domestic violence, anxiety and depression, separation of families, and untold economic damage. As a physician, I have made a promise to, “first of all, do no harm.” That means that, no matter how strong my desire to cure a patient’s disease, I must not cause worse problems in the process. For a patient whose condition is already improving, I certainly would not prescribe an experimental treatment, since its long-term risks and benefits are unknown.

I do not question the motives of those who have imposed masks, social distancing, isolation, quarantine, and other public health measure against the spread of Covid-19. Many of these interventions were based on fear and urgency, not established, proven standards. As scientific understanding of the disease itself and of the effect of these interventions has developed, we have found that some of them were over used and some of them have been of little value.

The Covid-19 epidemic in Ohio is waning. The “patient” is improving. Over 5 million Ohioans have already been vaccinated against the disease. Over 1 million are known to have recovered from Covid-19 and we may assume that millions more have recovered from asymptomatic infections. A recent study of over 52 thousand employees of the Cleveland Clinic shows that individuals who have recovered have immunity at least as effective as that from the vaccine. To vaccinate recovered individuals subjects them to risk with no benefit and diverts vaccine doses from others.

It is time to step away from fear and urgency and to return to thoughtful, informed, deliberate government focused on protecting our God-given Constitutional rights. H.R. 248 will do just that – it will allow Ohioans to consider the developing evidence of the risk of catching the virus and the risks and benefits of taking a vaccine, and then to make informed individual decisions about vaccination free from mandate, coercion, or discrimination.

Thank you for your time,

Conrad Lindes, M.D.