



**MOUNT CARMEL**  
**Opponent Testimony**  
**House Bill 248**  
**Ohio House Health Committee**  
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Chairman Lipps, Vice-Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo and members of the House Health Committee. My name is Jerry Mansfield. I am a Registered Nurse and currently serve as the chief nursing officer for Mount Carmel Health System. As one of the largest integrated health systems in the community, Mount Carmel serves more than a million patients each year. I have worked in health care for more than 35 years in both central Ohio and South Carolina and have a doctorate in public health from The Ohio State University – my focus of study was health behavior and health promotion.

I recently returned to central Ohio and started my position at Mount Carmel in late January of 2020; it has been a challenging transition as we have been focused on battling the COVID-19 pandemic the past 15 months. On behalf of my colleagues at Mount Carmel, I want to thank our partners at the federal, state and local levels for your support in our efforts as we prioritized the care and safety of the patients, colleagues, clinicians and communities we serve during this time. I have been encouraged by the collaboration of our health systems and public health partnerships – together we are doing great work.

At Mount Carmel, our goals during the pandemic were twofold - keep our colleagues, patients and communities as safe as possible and save lives. Those goals were in place before the pandemic and will continue into the future. It is within the context of those goals that Mount Carmel strongly opposes House Bill 248.

This proposal would destroy our current public health framework, a system that prevents outbreaks of potentially lethal diseases, similar to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this bill goes well beyond COVID-19 and if passed, this legislation can reverse decades of immunity from life-threatening, but vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis and polio. In short, HB 248 puts ALL Ohioans at risk.

As this committee has witnessed, there is a lot of passion on this topic, not only in these Chambers, but in our families, our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces. However, the facts are clear. Vaccines make us ALL safer from some very dangerous and deadly diseases, including those we have yet to encounter.

The most important thing I want to say today is that vaccines are safe and effective. They are the best tool we have we have to achieve the goals I mentioned earlier. Vaccines save lives and keep our colleagues, patients and communities as safe as possible.

HB 248 threatens that safety as well as the health of all Ohioans, the economy and our way of life. I am urging you to not pass this bill out of this committee. I would be happy to answer any question you might have.

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