

Testimony of Nathaniel Overmire, DO

In Opposition of House Bill 248

Submitted to the Ohio House Health Committee

June 11, 2021

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Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony on House Bill 248. My name is Nathaniel Overmire and am a proud osteopathic family physician, practicing in Mansfield, Ohio. As a member of the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP) Public Policy Committee, I write to strongly oppose house bill 248.

Vaccines are safe and effective. They prevent disease and save lives. The lifesaving and cost saving impact that vaccines have made over the last several decades are tremendous. The US Supreme Court has held that the government can compel vaccination to prevent life-threatening contagious disease even in the face of restrictions of liberty. This landmark case remains good and intact law today.

Since the introduction of vaccines for diseases such as measles or pertussis, for example, cases and deaths have fallen dramatically. As opt outs of childhood vaccines rise, we continue to see a resurgence of diseases, like measles, once thought to be eradicated. This puts our vulnerable populations at risk of increased morbidity or even death. While there are legitimate medical opt-outs, non-medical opts are threatening to upend years of public health progress and the safety of vulnerable populations. We must do our part to ensure the people have the facts and that we bust myths regarding safety and efficacy. We have been through this before with the infamous and now debunked claims of a link between vaccines and autism. We should not have to go down that same road again.

We continue to see in study after study, when vaccination rates climb, cases of disease fall. In particular, COVID vaccines are highly effective in preventing hospitalization and death. While the vaccines do not completely eliminate all transmission, there is up to a 94% reduction of transmission in recent studies. We will continue to study the data and ask critical questions to ensure the public understands the risks and benefits prior to receiving vaccination. HB 248 goes too far and dismantles much of the work done in public health.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in opposition of HB 248.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Overmire, DO