

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

I would like to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 248. When I was small, I remember that we weren't allowed to go swimming in the summer, because we might get polio. As soon as a vaccine was available, my parents got us in to see the family doctor to get them. There was no insurance, and my parents had to budget to pay for them for me and my brother, but they felt that protecting us was more important than anything else in their budget. The current SARS CoV 2 outbreak is far more dangerous than polio.

Thanks to vaccines, we live in a safer, healthier place than our ancestors before us did. Vaccinations are truly one of public health's greatest success stories. Through continued scientific breakthroughs, we continue to be spared from a multitude of setbacks and losses. HB 248 is deeply troubling, as it would give more diseases (some far deadlier and more contagious than COVID-19) the opportunity to run rampant, generate exorbitant, avoidable health care expenses, and most importantly, cost us lives.

Vaccines are a direct contributor to economic gains, too. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that for every \$1 spent on childhood vaccination programs, our country saves about \$10.90 in health care costs, and that routine vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2018 has saved our country close to \$406 billion in medical costs and \$1.88 trillion in total society costs.

Through vaccinations we not only provide critical protection for infants, young children, and immunocompromised individuals, but we keep ourselves, our families, and our neighbors safe. We have come take the success of vaccinations for granted as we all benefit from their protection every single day. Because of vaccines, we live our daily lives largely safe from many diseases that once spread through the population unchecked. We cannot afford to risk weakening that protection with HB 248. Vaccinations do not take away our freedoms; vaccinations *give* us freedom.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns, and once again, I urge the committee to reject HB 248 to keep Ohioans safe and avoid dangerous consequences for our state.

Sincerely,

Ann M Romaker, MD

Milford, OH