

HB 248: To Prohibit Required Vaccination Status
Opponent Testimony: [Steven A. Sutton, MD]
Ohio House Health Committee
June 15, 2021

I appreciate the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 248. I am gravely concerned by this legislation, as it would significantly weaken the robust public health framework that protects us from the devastation of many vaccine-preventable diseases. HB 248 does much more than prevent mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations, as it would actually apply to ALL vaccinations. This bill would decimate our progress in public health in the past century and hinder our efforts to fight communicable diseases in the years to come.

As a practicing allergist and immunologist I understand the positive impact that vaccines have had on humanity. Everyone understands that there is inherent risk with medical procedures and medications but the risk is vastly outweighed by the benefit. Gun deaths and automobile fatalities far outnumber COVID vaccine related deaths, if there are any. One study in 2005 estimated 15.3 deaths per 100,000 aspirin/NSAID users. This data has been challenged but whatever the number, it is higher than that attributable to vaccines. So with all of these other problems killing constituents at much higher levels why are we questioning the safety and efficacy of vaccines and the scientific process when it is a major reason for our societal success?

I am sure many of my colleagues are also pointing out the economic and scientific benefits of vaccination so I will spare you the details and just simply state that I am against this HB 248 and see it as a bill that is misinformed and will harm constituents who vote.

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.

Steven A. Sutton, MD FAAAAI, FACAAI