



Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee, thank you sincerely for the opportunity to provide testimony on *House Bill 248* (HB-248).

My name is Danielle E. Weber, MD, MEd. I am a practicing pediatric hospitalist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. I stand in opposition to HB-248, a bill that itself stands in opposition to the health and well-being of Ohioans.

I have devoted my professional life to care for patients and to pursue better outcomes for children and their families. This bill has me very concerned because of the widespread public health implications and the direct impact this will have on the health of children and families in Ohio.

Over the years I have treated many children with illnesses preventable with vaccination. I have cared for infants hospitalized with pertussis (or whooping cough) who presented with apneic spells (not breathing) which is incredibly scary for parents and potentially deadly. I have seen children severely ill from influenza who developed pneumonias that required intubation and mechanical ventilation in the intensive care unit. Many of these patients were too young to be vaccinated. Vaccines are one of the most safe and effective strategies we have at keeping children and communities healthy. Without vaccines we would see many serious and potentially devastating or deadly diseases increase in prevalence such as measles.

HB-248 purports to uphold choice and prevent discrimination. This bill can actually discriminate against those who are not eligible for or able to participate in key public health activities. Additionally, HB-248 will increase exposure risk for children cared for in daycare centers, as well as staff, putting them at higher risk. This could worsen health disparities in our communities as many parents with lower income depend on daycare for childcare.

The science is clear with study after study underscoring the degree to which benefits of vaccines outweighs the risk. The opposite is true of this bill. The risks of HB-248 are numerous and frightening.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opposition to this bill.

Sincerely,

Danielle E. Weber, MD, MEd

