

# CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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June 14, 2022

TO: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee

RE: **Opposition to HB 248**

Dear Members of the Ohio House Health Committee,

As the Health Commissioner representing over 883,000 Ohioans in Greater Cleveland. I am writing to express major concerns about HB 248-11, legislation that will place ALL Ohioans at significant health risk. Given the major negative health and economic impacts of this bill, an unprecedented coalition health agencies comprised of physicians, nurses, health commissioners, hospitals and business owners has assembled to share their unified opposition.

This proposal would destroy our current public health framework that prevents outbreaks of potentially lethal diseases, threaten the stability of our economy as it recovers from a devastating pandemic, and jeopardize the way we live, learn, work and celebrate life. The legislature has heard that this bill's purpose is to prevent the COVID-19 vaccine from becoming mandatory, but HB 248-11 applies to ALL immunizations, including childhood vaccines.

If passed, this legislation has the potential to reverse decades of immunity from life-threatening, but vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis and polio. In fact, the words "COVID-19" or "coronavirus" are not found anywhere in the bill. This legislation would also take away the rights of individuals who have businesses in Ohio to implement important safety measures meant to protect their employees, clients, and others that will sustain and grow local economies across Ohio. Many businesses have seen enormous fallout as a result of the pandemic and are working to rebuild and move forward. Business owners should each retain the right to carefully evaluate the unique circumstances they face and make their own determinations about what is best for keeping the workplace healthy and their overall recovery.

As current Ohio law allows for school immunization exemptions to decline vaccinations for medical, religious, or philosophical exemption. Since most businesses allow for flexibility in regard to vaccinations, HB 248-11 is an unwarranted bill. Infectious disease control is at the heart of public health practice and controlling the spread of communicable illnesses save money and lives, and allows for a protected and productive society.

I respectfully urgently request that HB 248-11 be rejected, to protect the vitality of Ohio's children and families and avoid disastrous consequences for the future of Ohio.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 216-201-2000 or via email at [tallan@ccbh.net](mailto:tallan@ccbh.net).

Sincerely,



Terry Allan, MPH  
Health Commissioner

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Terrence M. Allan, R.S., M.P.H. Health Commissioner