

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the Ohio House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 248.

HB 248 sets a dangerous standard for Ohio. It would prohibit citizens with chronic health issues from keeping themselves safe from those who choose to not vaccinate. An easy example are people who have cancer or are in remission. One of my good friends Jamie had her immune system reset as the result of her cancer treatments, and during the time it takes her to be revaccinated, she is at great risk from vaccine preventable diseases. I can only imagine how nerve wracking it would be to go to a regularly scheduled check up and not be sure if the nurse who's taking care of you is actually giving you measles. Businesses, especially those that are in the healthcare sector, should be allowed to protect their employees and customers from preventable diseases.

HB 248 would prohibit even asking if another person is vaccinated, thereby making it impossible for thousands of people just like my friend Jamie to protect themselves with the simple knowledge of who is more likely to spread a preventable disease to them.

It is especially disappointing to see a bill that would give more civil rights to people who choose to not vaccinate than the LGBTQ community currently has in Ohio. HB 248 has already had multiple hearings, and from my view it clearly has more enthusiastic support from the majority caucus. It's also ironic that this bill would protect people from disclosing their vaccination status, but members of the LGBTQ community are not extended that same courtesy in regards to HIV/AIDS.

This bill is an anti-vaccine bill and I urge a no vote from the committee. Thank you for listening, and I welcome questions at this time.

Sarah Barry