

HB 248: To Prohibit Required Vaccination Status
Opponent Testimony: Margaret Dunn MD
Ohio House Health Committee
June 16, 2021

Thank you for accepting my opponent testimony on HB 248. This legislation, if passed, would erase over a century of progress in eliminating death and disability from diseases preventable by vaccination.

In applying to ALL vaccinations, HB 248 would risk reemergence of diseases barely remembered by the public, or even younger health professionals, as the most common causes of death and disability in children. This bill would decimate our progress in fighting formerly dreaded diseases and hinder our efforts to fight communicable diseases in the years to come.

Hepatis B vaccine has eliminated the death and chronic liver disease common in health care workers once common in physicians and nurses. Meningococcal vaccine has eliminated the sudden death of college students. Vaccinating health care workers against flu can reduce the risk of their patients contracting influenza by 42%. It is not clear whether Helen Keller developed her loss of sight and hearing from Haemophilus influenzae, meningococcus or rubella, but all these diseases are now preventable by vaccination.

Even for diseases with a lesser chance of death and disability for children, such as chicken pox, vaccination confers an enormous reduction in parental time off and health care costs. Routine vaccination reduces health care costs.

Vaccinations provide critical protection for infants, young children, and immunocompromised individuals, keeping ourselves, our families and our communities 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.

I appreciate your consideration of my testimony. I urge the committee to reject HB248. The health and safety of our fellow citizens depends on it.