

**Philip Linden, MD, FACS, FCCP**

Chief, Division of Thoracic & Esophageal Surgery  
Surgical Director, Thoracic Oncology Program  
Program Director, Thoracic Surgery Fellowship  
Professor of Surgery

11100 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44106-5011  
216 844 7142 Phone  
216 844 7597 Fax

June 17, 2021

[Philip.Linden@UHhospitals.org](mailto:Philip.Linden@UHhospitals.org)

**HB 248: To Prohibit Required Vaccination Status  
Opponent Testimony: Philip Linden, MD  
Ohio House Health Committee**

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.

UNICEF reports an estimated 20 million children's lives worldwide were saved by measles vaccinations between 2000 and 2016. Global polio cases have rapidly declined by over 99.9% in just over 30 years due largely to vaccinations. Additionally, a study published earlier this year found that an estimated 69 million lives will be saved by vaccinations against 10 major pathogens between 2000 and 2030.

I understand the argument about freedom from having a vaccination, however one's freedom ends at the tip of the next person's nose. Vaccines approved by the FDA are very safe. Most of them, including COVID19 vaccines are extraordinarily safe and effective against death from the disease. An individual does not have the right to refuse the vaccine and put every other citizen's life at risk. Some individuals, such as those with cancer and others who are immunocompromised cannot be completely protected by the vaccine, and need to be protected by having each and every one of us who is healthy do everything we can to not catch and spread the disease. This means getting the vaccine. *It is our civic responsibility. It is our responsibility to our fellow citizen to keep them safe. This is similar to a college student needing to be vaccinated against meningococcus to*

*prevent his roommate from catching the disease and dying of overwhelming sepsis, or a child needing to be vaccinated against polio to prevent her kindergarden classmate from catching the disease and being paralyzed for life.*

The anti COVID vaccine movement is a movement of ignorance, and a threat to the life, liberty, health, and happiness of all those around us. *It is a threat to the cancer patients that I treat every day.* HB 248 would imperil us all and must be voted down.

Sincerely,



Philip Linden, M.D.