

Chairman Lipps, Vice-Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee, my name is Li Lin and I am here to testify in opposition to H.B. No 248

As a medical student at The Ohio State University, I am passionate about the health and wellbeing of my future patients. An invaluable component of our current way of life is widespread community vaccinations. The World Health Organization estimates that every year, 4-5 million deaths are prevented through vaccination.

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, more than 600,000 Americans have died from this virus. Through the decades of research on coronavirus vaccines and the federal government's work to expedite the bureaucracies of vaccine approval, we now have several safe vaccines that are 95% effective at preventing serious disease and death. The only way now to stop the pandemic is to encourage vaccinations and reach herd immunity. Only through increased vaccinations can we protect the ones we love and the most vulnerable members of our society who cannot receive vaccines.

As a medical student, I am learning how to provide the most excellent care to my patients through compassion and education. To my future patients, I would reassure them that vaccines are safe and make our communities healthier. I am discouraged by the widespread misinformation that has been used by community leaders to promote a political agenda. HB 248 is a NOT a freedom bill. There is already legislation in place that protects those who are unable to be vaccinated for various reasons including their health conditions and religious affiliations. Rather, HB 248 denies business and employers the freedom to protect their workers and customers from diseases that we know can be primarily prevented with vaccines.

Thank you for your time, and I urge you to oppose this bill in order to end the pandemic and protect the most vulnerable members of our community.