

August 11, 2021

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and Members of the House Health Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 248.

My name is Carissa Wilcox and I am a high school English teacher and a mother. I support House Bill 248 because it is extremely important that we, as humans and American citizens, are permitted to make our own healthcare decisions with the help of our personal physicians, and not be forced into any medical decisions in order to participate in free commerce, free society, and especially education or the ability to make a living in our chosen career. We should not have to share our personal medical information to participate in society. Our medical history is private and should stay that way. The government, businesses, entertainment venues, and employers should not be permitted to bully us into any sort of healthcare decision, and we also should not have to share our private health information with them. Vaccine choice is incredibly important because there is no medical procedure that is “one size fits all.” All individuals are different and all vaccines carry risks, some more severe to some people than others. Vaccine mandates also take away our rights as parents to do what we think or know is best for our children. A vaccine mandate takes away the idea of informed consent. If we are forced into a medical procedure to keep our jobs or participate in free commerce, we are not actually consenting. Finally, the fact that these vaccine manufacturers are free from liability and the fact that we, as consumers, have no recourse if injury or death were to occur from the vaccines, is extremely concerning. It is one thing if we CHOOSE to get the vaccine and something happens, but if we are forced into it, there should be some course of action we can pursue if anything bad were to happen. If we do not stop this now, we have no way of knowing what this could snowball into next. I refuse to treat my fellow human beings as if they are all diseased and I hope that this bill will be passed to help us get back to normal and not allow a new form of discrimination and segregation in Ohio. As a teacher, I have no problem teaching vaccinated or unvaccinated students and do not need to know their vaccination status to do my job. I do not want to be forced to treat any of my students differently from the others simply based on their vaccine status. Please help us keep our private health information private and our medical decisions between us and our physicians.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to provide testimony on the need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,
Carissa N. Wilcox