

Courtney Flanders

Concerned Advanced Practice Registered Nurse

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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 Courtney Flanders, and I am a Family Nurse Practitioner in Toledo, Ohio. I am in support of House Bill 248 (HB 248) for many reasons. First, our *Declaration of Independence* states that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” The key unalienable right that I would like to focus on is Liberty. Our Founding Fathers included Liberty in our *Declaration of Independence* to give all Americans freedom and prevent oppression based on political, social, or other viewpoints. By supporting HB 248 we are upholding what our Founding Fathers had envisioned for all of us in the United States of America- Freedom. Furthermore, the use of vaccine passports and mandating vaccines is taking away our freedom and right to choose. It will also cause segregation of our fellow Americans. Men before us did not risk their lives to free slaves and end segregation, just for recurrence in a different fashion decades later. I understand the innate desire to protect ourselves and our neighbors but forcing medications and segregation on individuals that do not want it for personal reasons, is not the answer.

My second point for supporting House Bill 248 is due to bio-individuality. Bio-individuality is based on the principal that no two human beings are the same which means that a treatment for all is ignoring this basic principle. What about those that have suffered vaccine injury, should they be kept from going to restaurants or shopping? What about those that have underlying autoimmune diseases that are concerned it may exacerbate their current disease state? Should they be made to feel less than? What about those that have already had COVID-19 and have natural antibodies that science has proven last longer than vaccine acquired immunity. Why should they be subjected to vaccination when they have just as much protection from COVID-19 as a vaccinated individual if not more?

As I have stated, I am a Nurse Practitioner and I have, at this time, declined to get vaccinated against COVID-19 for various reasons. If HB 248 is not passed, then I will likely lose my job. I have worked in healthcare since 2016 as an STNA, RN, and now APRN. My passion is to help those to heal, live a better life, and be there for in the darkest of times. I want to continue to live my passion but will not be able to if vaccines are mandated and need for passports are implemented. America is the greatest country to ever exist, it is the land of the free and home of the brave. I want to be free to choose my medical treatment and continue to be brave for myself and for those unable to by using my skills as a healthcare professional.

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

Sincerely,

Courtney Flanders