

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 Jacob Welsh. I am a Navy Veteran and Registered Nurse. I obtained my Bachelor's Degree in Nursing in 2014 and have worked in critical care since 2016. The reason I support House Bill 248 is because I believe in medical freedom. I joined the military after 9/11 to help defend my country, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. After being honorably discharged from the military, I chose the profession of nursing to continue my desire to help others and serve my community while also having the potential for sustainable career growth.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I served on the frontlines as an intensive care unit nurse in a major Level-1 trauma center. My base unit is the trauma/surgical/neurological ICU, but I did on occasion care for COVID-19 patients if the core COVID-19 ICU was full, or if I went to work on the designated COVID-19 ICU for staffing adjustments. I do not believe I ever contracted COVID-19, and did opt to receive the vaccines when they became available. While I did personally choose to get the vaccine, I do not agree with allowing businesses, schools, healthcare facilities, or agencies to mandate anyone to get this vaccine. Allowing American citizens, to have the ability to independently dictate their personal health decisions in congruence with recommendations provided by their trusted healthcare providers, considerations for their unique risk/benefit analysis, and review of available research and data are vital aspects of medicine that should not be discarded no matter what health crisis is present.

As I mentioned, I did personally elect to receive the COVID-19 vaccinations. My first dose was asymptomatic, however, my second dose was significant as I legitimately had concern for pending death due to my response to the second dose. I have never had such a reaction to any vaccination or medication before. Thus, I will absolutely not consent to any future boosters that become recommended for this vaccine. Aside from my own personal response to the vaccine, I know of others that have had significant reactions to the vaccines. For example, a now-former coworker, who was young and healthy prior to her vaccination, developed heart failure and no longer works on my unit. Another coworker developed high heart rate after getting the vaccine that led to needing an extensive cardiac evaluation. I have also cared for multiple patients that died soon after getting their vaccines. There are risks for both routes in dealing with this pandemic and it should not be any employer, agency, licensing bureau, school

or institution's decision what any American determines is the best option for their personal health.

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

Sincerely,

Jacob A. Welsh, BSN, RN