

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 Jennifer Morris and I am a Senior Accountant in the Finance department at Premier Health Network. The company has recently announced that ALL employees must be vaccinated by December 1st. I am **100% remote**, with no direct patient contact, and was not consulted in this decision. I have been told I will lose my position with the company if I opt out of this vaccination. My employment also provides my family's medical insurance. If I lose this position, it impacts our entire family in more ways than just income.

I do have the opportunity to ask for a religious or medical exemption, but the human resources department has to approve it. I find it offensive that they can determine whether my religious beliefs are acceptable to them or not.

The reason I support House Bill 248 is because I believe getting the vaccine is a personal choice that should not be able to be mandated by any public or private entity. I also believe that asking employees about their medical status is a violation of personal medical privacy and making a judgmental decision about their exemption status is religious discrimination.

Premier Health Systems is also forcing employees who opt out of getting vaccinated without an exemption to "voluntarily resign" instead of being terminated. They claim it is so the employee can be considered for rehire if they become vaccinated. However, I believe it is so the employee can't sue for wrongful termination and would make them ineligible for COBRA coverage. Again, I believe this is discrimination and insensitive to employees' personal needs.

For both myself and other health care workers throughout the state, this is a time sensitive issue. Many employees in the state have earlier deadlines for vaccination/termination than I do. Therefore, any efforts to expedite the normal legislative process is GREATLY appreciated.

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

Sincerely,
Jennifer Morris