

August 18, 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 Khristina Lahm, I am a Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner. I support House Bill 248 because I believe in freedom and liberty but most importantly medical freedom. I believe that every person should receive appropriate care regardless of health status. As a nurse, I do not treat an AIDS patient different than one struggling with side effects of chemotherapy. I do not judge and care for a person different based on vaccination status either. Nor would I ever. Discrimination from medical professionals is a breach of Hippocratic oath, discrimination based on vaccine status is doing harm. These professionals should have legal action taken against their licenses in my opinion if this is how they are choosing to now practice. Most importantly, each person has and should be the only one that can make the decision to get a vaccination. Especially one that the verdict is still out on, as it is still very new. Healthcare professionals should help to educate patients. Make them feel like they can openly discuss their hesitations and questions. Instead, all I am seeing and experiencing now is “get it or get out”. I should not lose my job, benefits, and annual wage increases due to something that I do not yet feel comfortable putting in my body. I am a good nurse, and I am a good employee. I should not be made to feel as a second-class citizen when I am upstanding. No one should be pressured and forced to do anything they do not want to. We do not force people to get heart surgery when they have a blockage or force a patient to get an IUD when we think they should not have more kids. That would be absurd, and this is no different. No one should receive lack of care because of their decision and especially vaccination status. No one should lose their jobs because of it either. Discrimination period is disgusting, especially if you are healthcare worker. It is important to so many of us in Ohio to get House Bill 248 passed. I fear without it we will lose healthcare workers at an unprecedented rate and patients in the end will suffer more. I hope that it does not come to that.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide testimony from the frontlines and the severe need for and urgency of House Bill 248.

Sincerely,

Khristina Lahm BSN, RN, MSN, APRN-CNP, AGPCNP-BC