

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee:

I am giving this written proponent testimony on Senate Bill 22 (SB22), because it is time to restore balance of power to Ohio's government. For far too long, Ohio has been operated like an autocracy. Governor DeWine and his Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director have enjoyed unilateral decision making that has affected the entire state, without involving the General Assembly. This has to end. It is not even a matter of the virus itself, it is a matter of proper function of government. We need the proper balance of power between all COEQUAL branches of government.

We have better treatments for COVID, and a vaccine is rolling out for those who want to take it. So, enough is enough. Governor DeWine arbitrarily shut down businesses, ordered people to stay home, and an election (which appears to have been illegal). Then he partially reopened Ohio. Yes, partially, because we will not be truly open until we are fully open without restrictions. To get to fully reopening and returning to normal, the Governor has constantly changed the goalposts, moving them another several paces ahead of us, and it is apparent we will never catch up under this current system.

We have no voice currently. That is why the General Assembly MUST take its power back. The amendments made to SB22 will do just that. It is time to get this mess reigned in. We cannot continue under such abuses of power any longer. The mental, emotional, social, and economic damages/costs far outweigh those of the virus at this point. I am sick and tired of people suffering, and I am sick and tired of Governor DeWine smirking and acting self-righteous as he runs our state into the ground with impunity.

It is all of these frustrations that highlight why we need to bring back balance of power and oversight. Without balance of power and oversight, a branch of government can cause undue damage to the entire government, to the state, and to its people and their civil liberties and rights. This is not the America I grew up in, and frankly, this needs to end. I do not like watching my state slide further into authoritarianism.

Let us end the authoritarianism by passing this bill with its amendments.

Vote YES on SB22!

Thank you,

Bryan Amatangelo