



**BEFORE THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET COMMITTEE  
THE OHIO SENATE  
SENATOR BOB PETERSON, CHAIR**

**HOUSE BILL 218  
TESTIMONY OF DALE LAWS  
CHAIRMAN  
THE OHIO MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION**

**December 7, 2021**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate General Government Budget Committee, my name is Dale Laws, and I am the Vice President of Manufacturing Operations for Whirlpool Corp., North American Region. I am here today in my capacity as the chairman of The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) to testify in opposition to House Bill 218.

The OMA was created in 1910 to advocate for Ohio's manufacturers. Today, we have nearly 1,300 members of all sizes throughout the state, unified in our mission to protect and grow Ohio manufacturing.

Manufacturing is the largest of the state's economic sectors, and Ohio is the third-largest manufacturing state. Our industry contributes more than \$112 billion to Ohio's GDP each year and is a leader in the state's private-sector employment. I tell you this as a reminder that any state proposal that impacts manufacturers will have a ripple effect across Ohio's economy.

Throughout the pandemic, Ohio manufacturers led the way in workplace safety while supplying the nation with essential goods. As manufacturers continue to navigate COVID-19's ongoing challenges to the best of their ability, interference by government officials compromises operations and hinders our ability to compete on a global scale.

To employers, this bill is not just about vaccines – it is about the rights to do business freely in Ohio. While many OMA members, including my company, are preparing to comply with the OSHA emergency temporary standard (ETS) should it be ruled constitutional, the vast majority of manufacturers are not currently, nor are they planning to, implement a vaccination requirement for their employees. Similar to OSHA's ETS, House Bill 218 erodes a private employer's right to make business decisions.

So much is still unknown about this virus and its multiple variants. Business leaders must be allowed to have access to the best tools to safeguard our companies and support the health and safety of our employees, customers, suppliers, and visitors whether it be because of COVID-19 or any other potential threat to employee health and production.

House Bill 218 would create uncertainty for employers, adding layers of legal complexity and bureaucracy that steals management time and distracts from our business of safely creating products for markets and jobs for Ohioans. Every policy decision that impacts Ohio's manufacturing competitiveness, in turn, affects our state's economic health and job creation.

During the course of the pandemic, Ohio has maintained its position as a national and global manufacturing leader. Let's keep Ohio focused on the recovery, not on state mandates making operations even more challenging in a time of a pandemic.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate General Government Budget Committee, for the opportunity to voice my opposition on behalf of The Ohio Manufacturers' Association to you today. We are simply asking you to not infringe on private employer rights and allow us to determine our own workplace policies. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.