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Health Commissioner

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December 6, 2021

Honorable Bob Peterson
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Senator Peterson,

I am voicing my opposition to HB 218 as passed by the House. However, with this in mind, I do appreciate the leadership of the Ohio House of Representatives for their attempt to create a suitable legislative solution to the ongoing deliberations concerning vaccine requirements by employers and universities in Ohio.

Unfortunately, HB 218 falls short for pandemic recovery and the health for all of our residents. This bill does not address the concerns expressed by the medical, business, and university communities about prior proposals of a similar nature. Protection of an employer's rights to make decisions in the best interest of their employees and those we serve and protect. The central fact is that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that local governments and communities are positioned to implement public health and safety measures to protect our jurisdiction.

Ohio does need solutions to the many issues surrounding the response and recovery to Covid. With the newest variant Omicron and future variants, there are unknowns and uncertainties. If HB 218 is passed, it will most likely have the unintended consequences of an inadequate response to future Covid and other diseases. I urge you to allow entities to make their own choices for Covid vaccination status and disease response. HB 218 would decimate that ability.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric J. Zgodzinski, DrPH, MPH, REHS, CPH
Health Commissioner