

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Cirino and Ranking Senator Craig,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill 218 (HB 218). My name is Erin McCann and I am a pediatrician at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. **I am writing to you today to express my strong opposition to HB 218 as it threatens the safety and health of our children and loved ones.** HB 218 is the newest iteration of a bill to limit the protection that vaccines provide my patients and their families. HB218 is extremely concerning as it poses a serious threat to the children I serve on a daily basis.

As I am sure you have heard on the news, hospitals are starting to fill again as the rates of COVID-19 infections rise on top of the increasing illnesses that are always seen at higher rates during colder months. At our children's hospital, we are seeing high volumes due to respiratory illnesses in addition to rising numbers of COVID-19 infections. We are also starting to see our first cases of influenza infections admitted to the hospital, another vaccine-preventable disease, and I cannot bring myself to imagine what the compounding effects of the flu virus and COVID-19 will look like for our children this winter.

I am so proud that Cincinnati Children's recognized the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine by adding this to the list of required employee vaccines. We believe what we tell our families; vaccines are safe, effective, and important. We are only able to provide a healthy workforce that safely serves our most vulnerable patients if we are also protecting ourselves and our families. The idea of dissolving vaccine mandates and preventing public and private institutions from requesting proof of vaccinations will drastically reduce the ability of hospitals to protect our patients and our own families as well. Especially now with the arrival of the Omicron variant and potential rise in infections, please let us protect the children and their families in this region by providing a safe, healthy workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opposition to this bill.

Sincerely,

Erin McCann, MD, MPH