

Testimony of Nathaniel Overmire, DO

In Opposition to House Bill 218

Submitted to the Ohio Senate General Government Budget

December 6, 2021

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Craig and all members of the Senate Government Budget Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today on House Bill 218. My name is Nathaniel Overmire, DO, and I am an osteopathic family physician, serving on the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP) Board of Directors. I am submitting this testimony today on behalf of the OAFP which represents family physicians across the state.

HB 218 is bad for business. And it is an overreach of government. By not allowing employers, and especially healthcare organizations, to enact common sense workplace rules, we risk continued undue harm to our staff and those we serve. As a healthcare provider, I do everything I can to protect my patients from undue harm. After all, a physician's oath is 'First, do no harm'. It is my responsibility to be informed and practice evidence-based medicine so that my patients have the best possible outcomes. As the pandemic enters another surge, hospitals are again overwhelmed, and we should be doing everything we can to contain the spread of this disease which has plagued us for almost 2 years.

I praise healthcare organizations' efforts to create common sense workplace rules. Employers' right to manage their workplaces free of undue interference from all levels of government must be protected. Our healthcare organization should be allowed to use the safe and effective tools that we have. We should not be sidelined while this pandemic continues to ravage our hospitals and clinics. Our healthcare organization, as well as other private businesses, should be allowed to monitor the needs of its employees and those that we serve to make decisions based on science and facts, not through politics. Our private organizations should be free, along with other health care facilities, nursing homes, schools and other businesses to protect our own workers and those that use our services so that we can prevent costly service interruptions. These interruptions can be devastating and costly. The loss of life or debilitation is staggering. And by implementing common sense workplace rules, we can prevent the spread of COVID-19 while also being role models in keeping our patients and communities healthy.

I urge this committee to keep businesses safe and not pass a senate version of this bill. We must be responsible adults and continue to create safe places of employment that lets employees be healthy and thrive along with those that we serve.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Overmire, DO

Ohio Academy of Family Physicians