



December 7, 2021

Chairman Bob Peterson  
General Government Budget Committee  
Ohio Senate

RE: Opposition to Sub HB 218

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate General Government Budget Committee.

Thank you for allowing Nationwide Children's Hospital to submit written testimony in opposition to Sub HB 218, which limits employers' rights to establish COVID-19 vaccination policies for the health and safety of patients, students, customers, and employees.

Nationwide Children's Hospital strongly supports immunizations and urges all who are eligible to be fully vaccinated. FDA-authorized vaccines have a robust and long track record of safety and efficacy for a variety of devastating infectious diseases such as polio, measles, whooping cough, meningitis, and now COVID-19. The evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that vaccines are safe and effective. The Nationwide Children's COVID-19 vaccination website contains information on the COVID-19 vaccines and locations for vaccination. For more information click [here](#).

Nationwide Children's Hospital has six defined, guiding ideals that we call our "One Team Values." One of these values is prioritizing quality and safety. As an employer with over 14,000 staff, we are obligated to create a safe space for our employees, patients, and community. We must be able to set employment expectations and manage our workforce to preserve a safe work environment, especially as we adapt to the challenges of the pandemic.

Employee vaccination and other infection prevention strategies are critical to protecting our extremely vulnerable patient population. With many children still ineligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, high rates of hospital employee vaccination are crucial in reducing the risk of virus spread. In addition to vaccination of staff, hospitals implement pre-visit screening, physical distancing requirements, COVID-19 testing, masking, eye protection, other personal protective equipment requirements, and specialized cleaning protocols to improve safety for patients and staff.

Nationwide Children's Hospital is opposed to Sub HB 218, legislation that interferes with the long standing at-will employment doctrine that has enabled private businesses to establish conditions of employment. Employers are best positioned to determine the policies necessary to keep their workforce, patients, and patrons healthy.

Our mission is to achieve the best health outcomes for the children we serve, a challenging goal in the current environment. We urge the committee to oppose Sub HB 218, so all Ohio employers preserve the ability to make decisions in the best interest of those they serve.

Rustin Morse, MD  
Chief Medical Officer  
Nationwide Children's Hospital