

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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December 5, 2021

TO: Members of the Ohio Senate General Government Committee
RE: Opposition to HB 218

Dear Members of the Ohio Senate General Government Committee,

As the Health Commissioner representing over 883,000 Ohioans in Greater Cleveland, I am writing to express major concerns about HB 218, legislation that will place ALL Ohioans at significant health risk.

Given the major negative health and economic impacts of this bill, an unprecedented coalition health agencies comprised of physicians, nurses, health commissioners, hospitals and business owners has assembled to share their unified opposition. This proposal would destroy our current public health framework that prevents outbreaks of potentially lethal diseases, threaten the stability of our economy as it recovers from a devastating pandemic, and jeopardize the way we live, learn, work and celebrate life.

The clear purpose of legislation is to render COVID-19 vaccine mandates that private businesses may wish to require for their own employees meaningless. This legislation would also take away the rights of individuals who have businesses in Ohio to implement important safety measures meant to protect their employees, clients, and others that will sustain and grow local economies across Ohio, due to workers out ill or hospitalized from COVID-19 infections. Cases, hospitalizations and fatalities are currently soaring in Ohio and the advent of the Omicron variant poses an additional risk to Ohio's workers and the economic prosperity of businesses.

Many businesses have seen enormous fallout as a result of the pandemic and are working to rebuild and move forward. Business owners should each retain the right to carefully evaluate the unique circumstances they face and make their own determinations about what is best for keeping the workplace healthy and their overall recovery.

Infectious disease control is at the heart of public health practice and controlling the spread of communicable illnesses save money and lives, and allows for a protected and productive society. I respectfully and urgently request that HB 218 be rejected, to protect the vitality of Ohio's children and families and avoid disastrous consequences for the future of Ohio.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 216-201-2000 or via email at tallan@ccbh.net.

Sincerely,



Terry Allan, MPH
Health Commissioner

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Terrence M. Allan, R.S., M.P.H. Health Commissioner