

Committee Members,

First of all, I'd like to thank you for your time, thought, and consideration on the matter at hand, SB22, especially during a time where it feels extremely difficult to express personal views and differences. We greatly appreciate your position of taking actions that are best for children, as they are the lost sufferers during this pandemic. As parents we are at the mercy of the leadership within our state that doesn't seem to have any system of collaboration or checks and balances. The power given to the health department has resulted in catastrophic injury to many, especially the forgotten, our children, who have come last during all the decision making. Every concern raised comes back to the guidelines and restrictions of the governor and health department. We have every scenario going on in our house: hybrid, full in person, and remote. All of them are failing. Our oldest, a senior in Dublin, on an IEP for ADD, began the hybrid model this fall attending school on Monday and Thursday only. We fought him every morning to get up, to complete his work, and to get help from teachers. To date he is failing every class, says all they do is cheat and sit in front of computers, and now, since they were sent home on Thanksgiving break to "be remote until after the holiday", is refusing to go back and has not entered the school since before Thanksgiving. Our second child, a freshman in Dublin-an artistically gifted and excellent honors student-started having panic attacks so bad, over sitting alone in the cafeteria-a desk all by itself, without a friend-that we can no longer get her up off the floor of the bathroom. She too, after being sent home "for the holidays" is refusing to go back to school. The post-school all-day-mask-wearing head-aches were debilitating to the point that she was unable to get out of bed at the end of the day. Our middle 2, 3rd and 1st grade, attend Catholic school-all day, every day. Last week, we made the call to pull our 3rd grader so he is now a remote learners. He cried every day after school and begged not to go to school every morning. He said they have to stay in their seats all day, can't touch anything in the classroom, spend most of the day on screens so no papers or materials are touched, and he only sees his teacher 1/2 the day because the kids have to be split into 2 rooms so they can be 6 feet apart. Wearing a mask all day was unbearable for him so, due to enlarged tonsils and adenoids that restrict his breathing and extreme anxiety, he has an exemption to wear a face shield, but he says its almost as uncomfortable-it steams up and sweat rolls down his face. Hes so upset about the face masks that he really wanted to come down to tell you in person, but he got "scared" today and changed his mind. My last "school age" child is 4, on an IEP through Columbus and has regressed during the lockdown. While his services are still provided via Zoom, it is not effective for him, as he is 4, and sitting in front of a screen for 30 minutes at a time is not appropriate. He is nowhere close to being ready for kindergarten next fall. A main variable in all this is that-I'm a teacher, with my Masters in Language Arts. I taught for 13 years when I had my 3rd grader, and 3 of those years were in administration. And, now, I'm a stay at home mom, so I'm here to support my kids all day long. I'm able to give my kids my full attention, and my expertise is teaching, but my children are failing-whether its academically, emotionally, socially, or mentally-my children are not succeeding and instead of making any progress at all, they are all failing in one area or another. So, I ask you to consider what is happening to children in a typical home, in an urban home, in a rural home, in a single parent home, in an impoverished, in an abusive home...if my children aren't succeeding in any one of the 3 learning models, what do you think is happening with most children. Our children are our future. They are the light and the hope for our country and we are failing them. We need to stand up and demand something more for them. We

need to stand up and demand that children return to school, full time, in a normal learning environment with schools and communities that love, support, and encourage them. We need to stop requiring students to wear masks and breath in their own waste and instead return to least restrictive environments for them to enjoy learning again. We are getting to a point where the damage done to our children will be irreversible. The time to act is now; we ask that you take the first step forward by voting YES for SB22. We are willing to support you however we can.

Thank you for all you do to support our children.

A note from Danny, my 9 year old, that really wanted to share his thoughts in person...

Please don't make us wear masks anymore. It's really hard for me to focus on my learning because I'm so uncomfortable. It's a long day in front of a screen and I can't breathe in the mask so I put the face shield on but it steams up and my head starts to sweat. I can't even think because I'm so uncomfortable. I get really bad headaches and stomachs at the end of the day. We even have to go out to recess with our masks on which is only 15 minutes but I can't take it off and I can't play with my friends because we all have to stay separated and can't cross into other sections of the playground so I never get to play with my friends. I don't even get to see my teacher half the day because she has to go back and forth between two classrooms. I tried to do it this year. I tried really hard but I just can't do it anymore. Thank you for listening to me. Danny

A great resource:

[An epidemiologist's perspective on COVID-19: the other side \(allinohio.com\)](https://www.allinohio.com/epidemiologist-perspective-covid-19-the-other-side)

In appreciation,

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