

As an Ohio resident that has experienced first-hand the negative affects of the prolonged public health and safety restrictions, I am testifying today as a proponent of SB22. I am deeply concerned about courses of action being taken under the current emergency powers and the dire effects it is having on all of us.

The ODH restrictions have had a direct negative impact on my 89 year old father. He was hospitalized twice and sent to rehab twice in January and February 2020. By the time he returned to his assisted living community, he was effectively walking with the aid of a walker better than I had seen him do in months. However, since the isolation order was in place, it prevented him from gathering with others for meals and social activities. Using his personal security camera, I was able to monitor him remotely and captured video documentation (which I prefer not to share publicly to protect his dignity, the emotional state of other family members, and facility staff members identities) showing his dramatic decline caused by this extensive isolation. Within 10 days of his return, his physical abilities deteriorated to the point where he could not walk or stand. This forced us to transfer him to a long term care facility where he continued to decline. He passed away on 12/10/2020. Throughout this entire time, I was not permitted to assist him with any of these transitions. As his primary family member caregiver, I was the one who filled the care gap and would make sure he had what he needed and attended to his personal needs beyond what the staff STNAs were able fulfill. It made no sense to me that community staff members could leave the facility at the end of their shift, venture out into the public like the rest of us and return to the community to care for residents as long as they wore masks, gloves and goggles, but I as a family member could not do the same. Isolating elderly residents is equivalent to placing prisoners in solitary confinement. The only difference is they've done nothing wrong to deserve that punishment. Our elderly citizens, and we as their loving family, are intelligent enough to understand the risks and take appropriate precautions as long as we are given the facts. Please do not continue to force these endless restrictions on us with no justifiable evidence or logical reasoning.

This bill restores the balance of power to where it should be, between the three, COEQUAL branches of government, and finally gives a VOICE to the PEOPLE of Ohio via their legislators during a declared emergency.

Our businesses, our economy, our social and emotional well-being, the final days of our elderly and the future of our children is on the line. Our state cannot thrive under the continued oppressive and unopposed orders of our over-reaching Governor.

Please stand up and protect our personal liberties and the future of our state by voting YES on SB22!

Thank you,

Susanne Dengel
440-796-3950