

Renee D. Hedges
Written Proponent Testimony
SB 22
2/2/2021

Dear Madam Chair Roegner and honorable members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee:

My name is Renee Hedges, and I am a concerned citizen in Ohio writing in support of SB22. The overreaching orders issued over the last several months by the Governor and the Health Director have affected my family in many ways. I was deemed permanently disabled in 2016 and was a Learning Specialist for sixteen years. I have been unable to access the needed medical care since July, 2020 due to extending orders. My health has declined over all this, and my options are only telehealth. I have a severe, degenerative, and rare neurological disorder as well as previous cancer monitoring, and I can't get proper cardiac, neurological, rheumatological, and oncology services over telehealth. That is what I am offered in place of wearing a mask. The lack of care has not only worsened my condition, but has caused hardship and stress which also progresses my main disabling condition. In addition, our teenage son has not been able to access school or sports, and we had to enroll him in an online Christian program in hopes to keep him educated. He has been feeling very isolated and most recently developed immense anxiety and depression. Our family has been discriminated against more times than I can count because every business has their own interpretation of the over one hundred orders that have been issued and reissued. There is mass confusion and divide in every community over the response to COVID and our Governor and Health Department is to blame.

My husband is a Psychologist, and he sees the devastating impacts daily to the population he serves including an increase in: suicide, depression, famine, hopelessness, failing grades, drug addiction, abuse and family strife. An emergency does not last an entire year, and the powers abused by Governor Mike Dewine are unacceptable. It needs to stop and has gone on too long!

Ohio needs checks and balances by giving the legislature the ability to rescind these orders. 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 health, our social and emotional well-being 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, in support of SB22.

Thank you,

Renee D. Hedges

Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio