

February 1, 2021

Dear Chairman Roegner, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Craig,
and members of the State and Local Government Committee:

I am testifying today in favor of SB22 as an Ohio resident 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 Governor's mandates have triggered my anxiety, depression and claustrophobia. I have suffered numerous traumas, since I was eight years old.

I am a stay-at-home mom. My responsibilities/job are to care for my three children. I need to get them to activities, school, help with homework, feed, cloth, and take them to appointments.

My job has been severely limited because of the facial covering mandates. Due to my mental health disorder, I cannot wear any type of face covering. I personally have not had a mammogram this year, cannot go to my annual eye exam, get my diagnostic blood work, and have not been able to get my teeth cleaned all because I cannot wear a facial covering.

Having spent seven years in Healthcare Philanthropy, writing grants and fundraising for my community hospital, I realize the importance of all these diagnostic tests for preventative care. I personally have helped women get screenings through the Susan B. Komen Foundation. Yet, I cannot go to my hospital, where I helped fund numerous projects, to get the same screening.

Are my healthcare rights or personal freedoms any less than any other Ohioan?

I have been denied services at public places. I cannot shop local in my community because I cannot get checked out due to the facial covering mandate.

Governor DeWine's new order in November was horrible timing because of the holiday shopping season. Like many I turned to the internet instead of shopping local.

Curbside does not always cut it. With my disorder I do not trust people, and do not want them making decision on my behalf. It took me two hours to purchase on-line Valentines for my children through Target, when I usually can run there, and pick it up in 20 minutes.

People stare at me. If my nose is running, due to the cold, and I pull out a tissue, I am looked at like I have the plague.

I now do not shop alone. I have to shop or go out-to-eat with my husband when he is off work because he can tolerate a facial covering. I fear confrontation.

Businesses do not honor the Governor's mandate for medical exemptions. Businesses' attitude is they are a private business and can do whatever they want.

Yet, they cannot build their building how they want because there are local, state and federal building codes. There is a Federal ADA Law that needs to be honored. There are hiring and Equal Opportunity Employment regulations that are to be followed. There is licensing requirements for local, state and federal governments before businesses can open.

This is the first time; I can remember that businesses are denying services based on outward appearance, since Jim Crow.

What have we become, as Ohioans?

I feel like my independence has been ripped from me. I have gone from an independent, confident woman, to living in fear that cops will arrest me in front of my children.

Door checkers at businesses now feel entitled to know my personal diagnosis, and whether it justifies letting me shop.

What have we become, as Ohioans?

There needs to be an investigation into the Governor's mandates, and when and how they will be lifted. We the people have done everything he has requested, but we are treated like children and blamed for the spreading of a virus.

Even our Attorney General, Mr. Yost, will not question the Governor's mandates, but the Governor has no problem spending taxpayer's money to defend his mandates in county and federal courts, and at times using an independent law firm.

Why has our government abandoned us?

I have had to fight to get my children admitted to our Catholic School because of facial coverings.

My oldest suffers from anxiety and depression and cannot tolerate any facial covering. The school, a Christian institution, turned their back on him. Wanting us to find a virtual option for him, potentially making him miss his last year with his classmates before they head to different high schools.

My child has a disease that no doctor, therapist can fix. He has even spoken of suicide. Do you know what it is like to put your head on a pillow at night and not know if he will be alive the next morning?

Medication can help, but it does not control the comments from classmates, teachers and administrators. He still holds his head high and has managed to get all A's and B's each quarter.

He needs teeth removed. How can he get this procedure done when he cannot wear a facial covering? He has not been to the eye doctor to get his yearly check. How is he supposed to do this without a facial covering?

I ask you. No, I beg you to hold this Governor accountable to the people that elected him, and start representing all Ohioans, including the least of us.

When Governor DeWine rolled out the November order, he stated this is for Ohioans to live by the Golden Rule, "Do unto others." What the Governor forgot was that Jesus never let the least of these suffer. He healed the lepers, the blind and deaf; let the children come onto him; and most importantly raised Lazarus from the dead.

Right now, Ohioans are not helping their neighbors, they are reporting their neighbors and turning them into the Health Department, Workers Compensation and the Liquor Board. To have their fellow neighbor arrested for trespassing, which prevents them from getting basic necessities, attend their child's extracurricular activity, or be thrown out of restaurants.

What are we becoming as Ohioans?

This SB 22 gives me hope because it 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 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!

Sincerely,
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Cc: Senator Bill Reineke – District 26