

SB22 Proponent Testimony

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Government Oversight and Reform

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Madam Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and honorable members of the Oversight and Reform Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding SB22. I am a mother of 2 beautiful children and a Registered Nurse with experience in Pediatric ICU and in the medical device industry.

I am a proponent of SB22 because I believe that 2 officials, one unelected, should not have all the power to make decisions that greatly impact the health and well-being of an entire state. Nearly a year ago we encountered a virus that appeared to be highly contagious and potentially lethal to many. Decisions were quickly made to mitigate the deaths from this virus. Businesses were closed, schools were closed, people were told to only leave their homes for essential needs, we were asked to stay distanced from others. We were told that 2 weeks were needed to “flatten the curve”. It has now been nearly a year and while yes, COVID 19 has unfortunately caused deaths, so have the measures taken to control the virus. What is being overlooked are the suicides, many in pre-teens and teens, the increase in drug overdoses, elderly being neglected in nursing homes and being left to die alone. People are walking into hospitals without an advocate by their side. Children are being sent to school in masks and asked to stay distanced from their friends and teachers, taking on the burden of potentially killing grandma. We have no idea of the long-term psychological effects of these measures on our future generation. We are well past 2 weeks and we have avoided the overflow of hospitals. If the Governor and Director of Health are left unchecked, when will it end? Why are these officials ignoring the ramifications of their lockdown measures?

A stroke at a fairly young age left my uncle unable to care for himself so he now resides in an Ohio nursing home. He has always been very social and looks forward to weekly visits from family members and friends. He would leave the nursing home at least once a week to go to a family member’s house or a family event. My mom is his primary advocate, checking on him regularly. She sets up his medications, cleans his small apartment inside the nursing home, takes him shopping and out to eat, takes him to appointments, etc. Since the lockdown my uncle has had most of this taken away from him. He now sits in a chair watching TV most of the day. He has even taken to sleeping in this chair. As a result he has multiple pressure sores

because he is not getting up and moving around as much. His communication has declined. He has more difficulty getting around. The nursing home gym was closed where he did his physical therapy exercises. He is depressed. I ask when he will be able to do the things he loves again and I do not know the answer.

In the event of an emergency it essential to act quickly, but that does not mean that our entire legislative system goes out the window. A system of checks and balances was put into place for a reason. Currently there are no checks and balances and this needs to change. One person cannot have unchecked authority. What if that one person has a particular agenda? What if that one person is not listening to experts on both sides of the issue. What if that one person is not listening to the needs of the people, the very people who elected him/her? Decisions involving the health and wellbeing of an entire state takes a collaboration of many. This bill does not take away the ability to act swiftly, it simply gives the legislative body the ability to bring in additional opinions, weigh the pros and cons of the order, and determine if the order should continue. The very reason you were elected was to bring a voice of your constituents. Voting yes on SB22 brings that voice. I strongly urge you to vote yes on SB22.

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