

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and the Honored Members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee,

Mandates and edicts issued by Governor Dewine over the past ten months in response to Covid-19 have had very negative effects on my family. My wife is a hairstylist that was forced out of work for two months without a plan being in place by the state to have unemployment benefits available for those effected by the order. She applied as soon as the state unemployment system allowed, but had trouble getting approved for benefits immediately because of a glitch in the system (or so we were told). It was October before she finally received benefits after finally getting help from our U.S. House Representative. Thankfully, we had financial resources available to us, but it required us basically emptying our savings. I hold the governor's office completely responsible for that.

My daughter, a now eleventh grader, was denied being able to pursue her dreams of running track in the spring because of the governor's mandate to shut down school and ban all extracurricular activities. Track is something she uses to help manage her depression and anxiety. Subsequent therapy was necessary during and already financially stressful time. My son, a now tenth grader, was in virtual learning the first semester of this school year because of education protocols suggested by the governor's office. My son had never gotten a grade below a B on any assignment in High School. He started receiving almost failing grades because he needs the structure of the classroom and virtual learning was very difficult for him.

Lastly, I have always been a very emotionally stable person who handles stress well. I have found myself feeling helpless the last ten months because my voice (my elected representatives) is not being heard. I believe the governor's office has totally disregarded the U.S. and Ohio Constitution by issuing mandates and orders without the approval of the Ohio Legislature. Also, allowing the ODH Director, an appointed official, to issue mandates without legislative approval is insulting to our Constitution.

Please vote in favor of SB22 and reign in the governor's office, who has ruled us in dictatorial fashion over the last ten months. We need Ohio back to work, our children in school without protocols which have proven to be useless, and our state legislature to be able to have a voice in any crucial decisions that so vastly effect the people of this great state. We need safeguards in place so one man is never again allowed to cripple our state.

Thank You,
Eric Cole