

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and the honored members of the government oversight and reform committee:

I am writing to request that you support Senate Bill 22 and put measures in place that will keep our governor's executive power in check.

I realize that one testimony may not evoke empathy for the plight of your fellow Ohioans, nor may hundreds or thousands of sad stories. It has become clear to me that unless ideologies align with your own, stories mirror your experience, fears match those that motivate your decisions, and grievances don't offend you, there is nothing that can be done to sway you into action to uphold Ohio's constitution.

You have already heard stories like mine; Loss of income, untreated health conditions, children who have lost a year of quality education and are now struggling with depression and anxiety, elderly parents who are not getting the physical and emotional care they need, family members who are living in fear and refuse to gather for holidays, weddings, or even a short visit, businesses refusing service or harassing me if my mask slips below my nose, loss of fellowship with other christians due to the closure of churches which has led to hopelessness and despair, physical decline due to inactivity, fear of forced vaccination in order for my liberties to be restored, realizing that my American dream will never be a reality because I have lost the freedom to pursue it, and the gut wrenching accusation that I am now viewed as a domestic terrorist because I don't choose the health recommendations my leaders have hastily deemed benevolent gifts.

You may have a spouse with cancer, a grandchild with diabetes, a daughter with an autoimmune disorder, or a parent with heart disease. These loved ones give you a justifiable reason to keep your distance, don your mask, and lock yourself away until Governor Dewine calls "all clear." Sadly, if you truly follow the science, there will never be a future without this virus. I feel Ohioans are at a stalemate with our governing body. Opinions will not be the catalyst through which personal freedom is upheld. Luckily, we have the rule of law. Ohio's constitution states: "All men are, by nature, free and independent, and have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and seeking and obtaining happiness and safety" (Article 1.1). I implore you to uphold the Ohio constitution. Your personal

beliefs should not infringe upon the rights of fellow citizens. Data used to make informed decisions which remove Ohioans' inalienable rights must be without error. This data must encompass the impact on ALL aspects of public health, labor, housing, education, infrastructure, commerce, the environment, the economy, and fiscal impacts; otherwise, it seems an abominable act to ignore the rule of law.

Article 1, section 16 guarantees Ohioans the right to due process under redress for injury. It specifically states: "...every person, for an injury done him in his land, goods, person, or reputation, shall have remedy by due course of law..." furthermore, I will remind you that such suits may be brought against the state. My testimony and those you have heard during this first week of February, are fraught with claims of injury to land, goods, person and reputation. It doesn't take a scholar to understand the magnitude of restitution that may be won from those in power during this tyrannical 11 months. I wonder how many Ohioans could seek damages for wrongful death, citing Article 1.19? How many Ohioans were denied treatment for their loved ones and even household pets, who then, suffered and died needlessly? Once the veil of fear is lifted and the shackles gnawed off, Ohioans will appeal to the courts in droves seeking justice.

"All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform, or abolish the same, whenever they deem it necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted, that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the General Assembly" (Article 1.2). Right now the constitution gives the Ohio legislature the power to protect the rights of ALL citizens. In a short while, ALL Ohioans will use a far greater power; they will vote for new representation. You see, our constitution guarantees that the people hold the power. It states, "This enumeration of rights shall not be construed to impair or deny others retained by the people; and all powers, not herein delegated, remain with the people" (Article 1.20).

My plea could have been a simple "do your job." As part of Ohio's General Assembly, your duty is to uphold the law which is guided by our state constitution, not your personal fears and opinions. I feel it necessary to inform you that your constituents are not dozing off under the "mask of protections" which have stolen

our liberty. We are not simply waiting for life to get back to normal. Ohioans have taken a gut punch which was the wake up call we needed to get back in the political game. God endowed us with life and liberty, our constitution protects those freedoms, and we will no longer blindly trust that governing bodies will selflessly protect and uphold those rights.

Thank you for reading my testimony. I hope that you will support Senate Bill 22.

Cordially,
Emily Hayes
Wood County, Ohio