

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

I am writing to add my testimony in support of the SB22.

Through the last several months, I have experienced personally a fraction of what those around me have in the name of COVID response. A response dictated by the governor, without meaningful opportunity for constituents to voice concerns, present additional information, or suggest other courses of action. The resulting several months of mandates by Governor DeWine, with limited timely recourse, have left many struggling on many levels. Again, I personally have been able to navigate the anxiety and negativity that living under these mandates produces; however, my heart hurts for the family and friends who have struggled in a variety of ways.

I've seen friends who are working parents, in fields that don't lend themselves to working from home, adjust to children learning virtually while trying to remain financially stable. The strain of juggling childcare, working, teaching, and maintaining their household often wearing down normally optimistic outlooks to a state of discouragement and frustration.

I've watched children struggle in their education, mentally and academically, as some school boards and officials have refused to allow in-person classes. Bowling Green City Schools is among them.

I've watched family, disappointed at the thought of not seeing each other at the most special of occasions. The disappointment that leads to depression and despair when left unchecked and moments of darkness have no light of hope.

I've heard the stories of friends bullied for not being able to wear a mask due to medical conditions, being treated as though they were waving a loaded gun instead of simply trying to draw breath. Sometimes by friends and family who have bought into the idea that a mask is a singular safety measure despite evidence being unable to prove it provides any meaningful protection to anyone around the wearer.

I've watched with concern as the small businesses in my community seem on the brink of closing forever, some of which have already met this fate. They have adjusted and complied in many creative ways while taking on debt and risking further their financial future. All while large chain stores have been given opportunity to thrive.

I've seen those in physical pain unable to get the elective surgery necessary to get on the road to better health. Often managing pain with medication that lends itself to addiction. I've also seen an untimely death of a young woman; someone with aggressive cancer that I can't help but wonder was not found due to fears of COVID keeping her from seeking a doctor.

Overall, I've watched in unbelief as a Governor and his unelected officials were able to create a narrative through manipulated numbers and one-sided "science", claiming to save lives while putting other lives on the line. 'm sure those testimonies are among the others you receive.

This experience has brought to light the need for oversight and a meaningful way to be represented in these rare, but significant situations. To hold accountable in a timely manner the actions of the Governor. To bring priority back to the constitution and rights of the citizens. This bill would allow for this.

Thank you,

Jenette Yocom