



**Steve Allen, M.D., M.B.A., Chief Executive Officer
Nationwide Children's Hospital**

Written Testimony - House Bill 193

House Economic Development, Commerce, and Labor Committee

September 12, 2017

Chairman Young, Vice Chairman DeVitis, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Economic Development, Commerce, and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **opposition to House Bill 193**.

Nationwide Children's Hospital is committed to providing the highest quality care to all children and their families through a comprehensive, integrated pediatric healthcare delivery system. With over 11,000 employees providing care and assistance to our patients and families, and more than 1.4 million patient visits from all 50 states and 52 countries, HB 193 raises serious concerns as it would prohibit an employer, including a hospital or healthcare facility, from requiring employees to be immunized against the flu.

House Bill 193 greatly undermines NCH's ability to safely and appropriately care for our patients and families, while also putting the health of our employees at risk. It is our top priority as a public health system to protect patient lives, especially our young children and infants with weakened immune systems most vulnerable to the influenza virus.

Contrary to what proponents may claim, research has shown that vaccinations for the influenza virus are a safe and effective, ultimately protecting patients of all ages with myriad conditions. According to the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, influenza continues to be the leading cause of vaccine-preventable deaths in the Nation, with an average of 24,000-38,000 deaths reported per year. Additionally, mandatory influenza vaccinations have been highly recommended by all major public health and infectious disease authorities including the Association of Professionals in Infection Control and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice.

Flu vaccines are necessary for patient safety and employee health within our system. It is important to have a healthy team of providers available to adequately care for our young patients. The vaccine can assist in decreasing lost workdays and reduced productivity while providing employers the decision-making ability regarding the health and safety of their staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to HB 193. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at 614-722-4561 or steve.allen@nationwidechildrens.org.

Best,

Steve Allen, MD



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