

Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and Members of the House State and Local Government Committee:

Thank you so much for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HB 618. I urge all of you to support this piece of legislation that reigns in the Ohio Department of Health Director's apparent authority and implements checks and balances for any ODH order issued by requiring approval from Ohio's General Assembly.

As a parent my family's life has forever been changed by the "2 week" decision made by a single person to close down the entirety our state. My child was going to a private school, which the base of the education was hands on learning. He was sent home from March onward with almost no learning actually occurring as the drastic change of environment to schooling at home wasn't supported by having the correct materials. We paid thousands of dollars for our child to stay home like an extended summer vacation where we couldn't even travel or visit parks when the playground equipment was off limits.

This year our decision to homeschool hasn't been made lightly. My son's hands-on learning style wouldn't be supported by Zoom classes up to 7 hours a day if he continued to attend that same school he did last year. At no point has it been established that it is safe to cover a 6 year old's face with a cloth mask for 7+ hours a day. No studies have been done on this. This decision was implemented by a single person, and not agreed upon by those in our legislature which actually represent the millions of people in our beautiful state. Our State Representatives and Senators are the chosen voice of Ohioans. Bring the power back to the people. Let us choose what is appropriate, especially when it so severely affects the next generation.

Sincerely,  
Brandy C. Patrick