

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee: Thank you for allowing me proponent testimony for HB618.

As an emergency room physician, small business owner, and mother of two I have been acutely aware of how profoundly negative the management of this pandemic has been on our communities.

With the shutdowns came significant hardship resulting in an increase in ER visits for overdoses, drugs of abuse, alcohol abuse, physical abuse and mental health decline. Anxiety has been ubiquitous.

Small business has been dying a slow death by butter knife if they have not already yielded.

Many of our community have become food insecure.

Our children in Huron School systems have spent 25 non-consecutive days in face-to-face learning out of the last 7.5 months. They are forced to mask at all levels, creating unnecessary psychological effects.

The governor and the Ohio Department of Health are not acting in favor of the overall health of the communities and we the people are not being represented. We ask that you support HB 618 in order to bring back democracy and remove this perpetual state of emergency from which a small subset is allowed to act in tyranny. There is more at stake than trying to stop a virus, there needs to be an end game. Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elizabeth A. Laffay, DO