

HB 618 Proponent Testimony

Mandi Wolfe

House State and Local Government Committee

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

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HB618. **I am a proponent of HB618** because I believe that the governor of Ohio and the un-elected director of the Ohio Department of Health have exhibited and exerted authority over Ohioans beyond the scope of their designated roles. We have seen increasing mandates which restrict freedoms of individuals, businesses, and other groups over the past 8 months. This amount of power should never be given to the executive branch and an un-elected official without the balance of power from our elected representatives. We have chosen representatives to be our voice in matters like these and yet our current law leaves us voiceless against the Department of Health.

We Ohioans possess certain unalienable rights to decide our place of employment, to receive in-person education as we choose, vote in person, shop in person, visit with our loved ones in the manner we chose -whether at home or in a nursing home, have an advocate with us in person to any medical appointment or hospitalization, and decide upon mask wearing. I, as an individual, have the right to decide what possible risks to my health and safety exist, and take measures to protect myself as I see fit. I, as a nurse practitioner, could offer testing and treatment options to my patients, but I never could force them into any certain decision-nor would I even have wanted to. I believe we must each take personal responsibility for our own health and be willing to live with any consequences of that choice- favorable or not. The governor has not only acted like a physician for Ohio but has also decided for Ohioans by mandates, well outside the boundaries of his authority. We appear to be losing freedoms now almost daily and yet, this loss of freedom will not result in stopping a virus that has been circulating for a year now.

HB618 is an important checks and balance that I believe our founding fathers cherished when they made us a constitutional republic. We need you as our representatives to have a clear role and voice in matters like these. I appreciate the ability to submit this testimony to you and I urge you to uphold your oath to the constitution and protect our unalienable rights by voting **yes to HB618**.

Mandi Wolfe

Hilliard, Ohio