

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the State and Local Government Committee:

Anxiety of the Pandemic and The Response

I have suffered with anxiety, and this year I have had many symptoms come back that make each day difficult for me. This makes me angry as I know that if it is effecting me, then it is effecting fellow Ohioans who struggle with anxiety like I do. Children who have to deal with anxiety on normal days, now dealing with mask wearing, social distancing, not seeing their friends. The toll all of this fear has had on so many people is in my opinion unnecessary.

Throughout this pandemic one thing has been a constant. Fear. From government authorities, the media, and health professionals. The fear has not let up, even though there is plenty of good news since the start of the pandemic. The masks and lockdowns have a real negative effect on our mental health. Every year around 40 million adults are effected by anxiety and there are many young children that suffer from anxiety disorders starting around 6 years of age. Many Americans suffer with anxiety on a good year, but 2020 has taken fear to a whole new level. Much of this fear is unwarranted, but that is not what our Governor and tells us. It seems, the Governor wants us to be afraid, even if it effects our emotional and physical well-being just as much as a virus.

The Power of the Legislature

The legislative body must put an end to the current health orders and require that the Governor, The Ohio Department of Health and/or any Health emergency governing body seek approval from the Legislature and include the Legislature in any and all emergency response processes involving public policy, orders and mandates.

There is a mountain of evidence available now compared to what was available at the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Governor continues to deliberately bypass the legislature and in doing so undermines our democracy and the Ohio Constitution.

We have reached a point in this health emergency where the imminent threat we faced in the beginning, has changed to a serious ongoing health concern. Data is now available to support this. If there is no imminent threat, then there is no reason the Governor cannot make his case with the Legislature and use the lawful legislative processes to move forward in the health emergency response.

No matter what side of the political aisle you are on, the Ohio Constitution, laws and processes must be upheld and followed. The Governor along with all representatives and senators, represent all people of Ohio regardless of party, and all took an oath to defend and uphold the Ohio Constitution.

The damage that has been done, not just by the coronavirus, but also by an overreaching, draconian response, has, and continues to have a multitude of effects on the citizens and economies of Ohio. Even if all the mandates, emergency orders and fear mongering stopped today, the effects will continue to reverberate for years.

If you do not vote this bill out of Committee, you will choose to not take a stand and take back YOUR governing power which comes from the people you represent. If House Bill 618 goes nowhere, you will not only have given up your legislative authority and power, but the power of the citizens. Once the citizens have no power, and the Legislature has no power, we cease being a democracy.

Thank you,

Micah R Aills