

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

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony for the hearing on HB 618.

I write to you as a lifelong Ohio resident, parent of two children, Ohio business owner, and college science faculty.

I support this bill because I believe that two people, one who is not elected, have had far too much power in our state and the Ohio Revised Code needs to be changed so that this does not happen again.

Having two degrees in science, I have followed the data and the models from the beginning and believe our state's response to the pandemic does not match up with what the data has told us. There is an increasing amount of data that shows us this is true. From the beginning, we knew that elderly people were at primary risk, yet policies have been enacted that have caused all Ohioans untold pain and suffering and economic ruin of those not at risk of the disease or of severe disease.

Small businesses have been ruined or severely affected due to the shutdowns, economic destruction, and the fear created by our governor and health director, including my chiropractic office. Countless seniors are dying from isolation and depression, including my uncle, who died alone in a nursing home. Hospital patients are being denied visitors, and visitors help provide transparency and advocacy for their loved ones in a hospital setting. Children are wearing masks all day which is patently unhealthy for them, and suffering mental health issues and being denied a good education, including my children.

Our state legislators are the elected voice of Ohioans, yet none of them are listening or doing anything, to stop this government overreach, for a virus that has over a 99% survivability rate. Our state is in economic ruin, due to the decisions of people who are still collecting their full salary while the rest of us suffer.

The mountain of data on coronavirus does not support the policies enacted and I implore you to vote yes on HB 618 so that Ohioans can get back to normal and have the freedom to live our lives and run our businesses as we see fit, and determine our own choices with the risks we are willing to undertake. There are no other measures here that will suffice. My family is considering leaving Ohio and moving ourselves and our business to Florida or Georgia, which have governors that are willing to stand up for their citizens. I have heard that there may be more shutdowns or curfews coming here, we are being left with no other choice.

Thank you,
Dr. Julie Nichols
Cincinnati, Ohio