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Monday, June 14, 2021

To: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee
 Re: HB 248-11

Dear Ohio House Health Committee,

As organizations representing nearly 2 million Ohioans, we are gravely concerned by HB 248-11, legislation that **puts ALL Ohioans, including children, at risk**. Among us are physicians, nurses, health commissioners, hospitals and business owners, who feel moved to firmly voice our shared concerns. At its core, this proposal would **destroy our current public health framework that prevents outbreaks of potentially lethal diseases, threaten the stability of our economy as it recovers from a devastating pandemic, and jeopardize the way we live, learn, work and celebrate life**.

The legislature has heard that this bill's purpose is to prevent the COVID-19 vaccine from becoming mandatory, but HB 248-11 applies to ALL immunizations, including childhood vaccines. If passed, **this legislation has the potential to reverse decades of immunity from life-threatening, but vaccine-preventable diseases** such as measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis and polio. In fact, the words "COVID-19" or "coronavirus" are not found anywhere in the bill.

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This legislation would also take away the rights of individuals who have businesses in Ohio to implement important safety measures meant to protect their employees, clients, and others. Many businesses have seen enormous fallout as a result of the pandemic and are working to rebuild and move forward. Business owners should each retain the right to carefully evaluate the unique circumstances they face, and make their own determinations about what is best for keeping the workplace healthy and their overall recovery.

As current Ohio law allows for school immunization exemptions to decline vaccinations for medical, religious, or reasons of conscience (known as the philosophical exemption), and most businesses allow for flexibility in regard to vaccinations, we question the need for HB 248-11. This overly broad proposal would further strip away accountability and compassion for our fellow Ohioans, and cause severe disruption to our state's health, economy, and way of life. **It is our urgent plea that HB 248-11 be rejected, to protect the vitality of Ohio's children and families and avoid disastrous consequences for the future of our state.**

Respectfully,

Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati

- Akron Children's Hospital
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc.
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- American College of Physicians
- American College of Surgeons - Ohio
- Anthem
- Arthritis Foundation
- Association of Ohio Health Commissioners
- BASA – Ohio's Superintendent Association
- Bio Ohio**
- Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)
- Buckeye Health Plan
- CancerCare**
- Cardinal Health**
- Center for Dignity in Healthcare for People with Disabilities**
- Central Ohio Primary Care Physicians**
- Charitable Healthcare Network
- Children's Defense Fund
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
- Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber**
- Cleveland Clinic**
- Columbus Medical Association
- Columbus Partnership**
- Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce**
- Dayton Children's Hospital
- Global Healthy Living Foundation**
- Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association**
- Groundwork Ohio
- Immunize Colorado**
- Immunize Ohio
- Inter-University Council of Ohio**
- Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio**
- Medical Group Management Association
- Mercy Health**
- Molina Healthcare
- Montgomery County Medical Society**
- Mount Carmel Health System**
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners**
- National Meningitis Association**
- National Patient Advocate Foundation**

- Nationwide Children's Hospital
- National Hispanic Medical Association**
- Ohio Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics
- Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
- Ohio Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs
- Ohio American College of Emergency Physicians
- Ohio Association of Advanced Practice Nurses
- Ohio Association of Child Care Providers
- Ohio Association of Community Health Centers**
- Ohio Association of Health Plans
- Ohio Association of Rheumatology
- Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators**
- Ohio Association of School Nurses
- Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators**
- Ohio Business Roundtable
- Ohio Chamber of Commerce
- Ohio Chapter – American College of Cardiology
- Ohio Children's Hospital Association
- Ohio College Health Association**
- Ohio Counseling Association**
- Ohio Counseling Association
- Ohio Dermatological Association
- Ohio Health Care Association
- Ohio Health
- Ohio Hematology Oncology Society
- Ohio Hospital Association
- Ohio Manufacturers' Association
- Ohio Nurses Association
- Ohio Orthopaedic Society
- Ohio Osteopathic Association
- Ohio Pharmacists Association
- Ohio Physical Therapy Association**
- Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association
- Ohio Public Health Association**
- Ohio Society of Pathologists
- Ohio Society for Respiratory Care**
- Ohio State Coroners Association
- Ohio State Medical Association
- Premier Health**
- ProMedica Russell J. Ebeid Children's Hospital
- Retire Safe**
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**Science and Families Engaging Communities Coalition
and Action Fund**

SummaCare

The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio

The Aids Institute

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

The Health Collaborative

The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants

The Ohio Foot & Ankle Medical Association

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Triage Cancer

TriHealth

UC Health

UH Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital

**University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in
Developmental Disabilities**

Vaccinate Your Family