

March 19, 2023

Re: SB 315

Proponent SB 315

Written and in-person testimony

Honorable Chairwoman Gossage and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

SB315 as written has been a long time in coming. It is an excellent bill that underscores health freedoms and liberties established in both our US and Kansas Constitutions. You swore an oath to uphold these constitutions.

In 2022, my husband, along with many other folks, was questioned by a higher ranking employee to determine if my husband's religious belief's were really what he believed when he submitted a religious objection to his employers vaccine mandate. Since when does an employer have the right to decide if an employee's religious beliefs are "sincere"?

Vaccine mandates. There is nothing about a vaccine that guarantees someone would be better able to execute a job or task. NO vaccine is 100% safe or effective — not one. The choice to assume the risk of bodily harm or death, or not, should be up to the employee without coercion, threats, bribes or compensation or punitive action on the part of the employer.

Parents are to be the ultimately authority over the welfare of their children. No government one-size-fits-all policy should be enforced upon children of any age, including vaccines. No vaccine is safe for every child. And parents who choose to have their children vaccinated as well has those who don't should have the freedom to make those decisions. Parents who should be free to choose a provider who's care, values, and facility line up with what they believe is best for their family and children.

A friend of mine is getting ready to begin clinicals in the last leg of her nursing education. She is a smart, caring, conscientious nurse. She is currently faced with the decision to continue or to forfeit the last few years of nursing school because of vaccine mandates from various Kansas medical facilities where she is scheduled to do her clinicals. To continue would require vaccines that go against her religious beliefs... a compromise she is unwilling to make. Ironically, this same commitment and integrity are part of what would make her an excellent nurse... It is foolish to loose this kind of character and talent in the nursing field over something that in the end, doesn't have a guaranteed track record of safety and efficacy — vaccines.

I support SB315 as written and ask that you pass this bill that it may go forward for a full legislative vote.

Karen Hershey
A resident of Kansas