

March 23, 2021

Governor DeWine,

As Executive Director of a nonprofit chamber of commerce serving 110 health and human services nonprofits in the Columbus Region, we have deeply appreciated your conscientious and compassionate approach to navigating the pandemic, and your ongoing recognition of the enormous health risks it poses--and the tributaries of crisis it has created for our economy, for our communities, for the health and human services sector, and most importantly, for Ohioans.

Conversely, we have watched with alarm as the General Assembly has sought to undermine benevolent health measures that have undoubtedly saved lives by mandating masks-wearing and social distancing measures for the airborne disease that will have taken over 600,000 lives from us by year's end.

Indeed, the health measures that so many lawmakers have found objectionable have made our members' 14,000-plus employees *safer*, as well as the hundreds of thousands they serve, by helping to mitigate the risks agencies *must* face in delivering services in person. Just like hospitals, our members are rightly deemed *essential services*, and any and all measures to improve public health are therefore imperative while they try to do just that for each and every person that seeks their help in homeless shelters, food pantries, child care centers, behavioral health clinics, and more.

Furthermore, the General Assembly has failed to consider the long-term ramifications of the authority it seeks to wrest from our stewards of public health: SB 22 would allow the General Assembly to unilaterally and immediately override *any* emergency health order. There is not a legislative body in the United States that has gone so far; it is anathema to public health to handicap a state's ability to manage a public health emergency as much as SB 22 seeks to do.

Lastly, SB 22 would not only wrest control from the executive branch, but also from local health authorities. This, too, is counter to sound crisis management and the greater good of public health in our great state.

After a harrowing year of navigating the deadliest year in American history, we have learned and will continue to learn many lessons. One of them is that the executive branch of our state government should not be powerless in using its judgment to keep Ohioans safe in the face of a public health threat.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Corey
Executive Director
Human Service Chamber of Franklin County