

Do you know the numbers of failed vaccines that never make it to market? Do you know why they don't? Logic would tell us that they don't make it to market because they are proven ineffective and/or detrimental to the recipient. It takes years of clinical research, review and testing to bring a vaccine to market. This, again, is for particularly good reason, which I will not belabor but will assume you understand the history and therefore you have working knowledge to use in affirming this legislation, HB1171. To me this is a no-brainer decision for legislators. I have a right to health. I have a right to make decisions, in my best interest, to protect my health and wellbeing. This means I have the right to choose to accept or refuse the COVID 19 vaccine. For an employer to require me to take said vaccine is unconstitutional and outside the boundary of the employer / employee relationship.

There are so many unknowns about the COVID 19 vaccine. We should not allow employers to dictate the administration of COVID 19 vaccine as a requirement for employment. We are told that if we contract COVID, with the vaccine on board, we may still get sick, but our risk of death is diminished. The risk of death from COVID for working aged adults (ages 16-54), in general, is low. It is documented that the younger population has increased risk of adverse events from the COVID vaccine –the sector of the population that is working will see more unproductive days due to the vaccine versus the risk of contracting COVID. Young, employed persons are the backbone of our economy.

COVID 19 vaccines available today are not tried and true – they have not been through the rigorous testing that is generally required of vaccines. How long is this therapy effective? Do we know? No. Maybe the efficacy is prolonged in certain individuals versus others. If we agree to the pressures of our employers to take the vaccine, will this commit us to have to take every course; again, we have no idea the “schedule” for this vaccine. We have no idea what the “assault” overtime with said vaccine looks like. Will workgroups be diminished in their capacity for output and production? Furthermore, working people of all age, sex, race, creed... are human beings with their own personal medical histories and genetic makeup. Personally, I have autoimmune issues, as do my spouse and child. These issues are not life threatening now, but who is to say the COVID vaccine will not exacerbate a condition, leaving one or all of us impaired, unable to work, or dead. All for the sake of maintaining employment to keep a roof overhead and food in our bellies? Who would help us if we lost our jobs? All 3 of us have suffered adversely from the administration of a vaccine. None of us currently take the annual flu vaccine as a result. People like us were not used as test subjects when these new COVID 19 vaccines were under development and in testing. We were turned away.

Why would we want to set a precedent, gifting a loophole to employers who know nothing about our health status and don't have a right to anyway? How will legislators “manage” this gaping loophole that would give employers extraordinary power? How will this newfound power be balanced? You cannot say that this will not embolden employers to discriminate with regard to hiring, promotion, etc. This power fills me, and others like me, with a sickening dread.

It is absolutely reasonable for an employer to request that an employee sign a waiver releasing the employer from potential suit if the employee were to become ill, or die, from COVID. Employees should accept that responsibility in writing.