**From:** Tim Harhen

**To:** DPH-Testimony, Reg (DPH)

**Subject:** DPH August 1st Public Hearing

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I am not in favor of requiring vaccinations. It is difficult enough to find qualified people to fill vacancies, especially paramedics and this will just add to that burden. Constitutional rights aside, that is a topic for another conversation, what would happen if currently employed members refused? We’ve never required flu vaccines, nor COVID vaccines, even during the pandemic, though it was highly encouraged and all but one member was vaccinated against COVID, and the majority of us still got COVID, some more than once. Also, who pays for the vaccinations if they are going to be required for employment? I see the individual EMS services being required to pay for the vaccines, which is just another added financial burden for EMS services that are already cash strapped.

One lesson learned during the pandemic, amongst many, was the need to mask up, in addition to other required PPE, for responses to respiratory calls. This alone should greatly diminish the transmission of disease. Instead of requiring vaccination, the statewide PPE protocol should require surgical masks, at a minimum, for responses to respiratory calls or suspected respiratory infectious diseases. East Bridgewater Fire/EMS currently requires this for our EMS staff.

Sincerely,

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