

Senate Political Subdivisions

HB 1323

Chairman Burckhard, I urge a Do Pass on HB 1323

### **Mask Mandates Rest on Poor Evidence**

Yet even for those who have not acquired immunity through prior infection or vaccination, the supposed mitigation benefits of masks are not based on any conclusive scientific evidence. Back in March 2020, Fauci, Surgeon General Jerome Adams, and Vice President Mike Pence, the head of the US coronavirus task force, all assured Americans there was no need to wear masks, Adams even suggested wearing masks might be counterproductive.

In Denmark, a large randomized control trial to assess the efficacy of masks in protecting against COVID-19 infection found no statistical difference in infection rates between mask-wearers and non-mask wearers. A Wuhan, China study of 10 million residents found that asymptomatic positive cases was very low, there was no evidence of transmission from asymptomatic positive persons to traced close contacts, and no asymptomatic positive cases in over 96% of residential communities.

Back in June, when Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of the WHO's emerging diseases and zoonosis unit, similarly acknowledged that asymptomatic spread was "very rare," there was some rapid back pedaling. But, although the original claim was massaged, it was never actually repudiated.

Even the CDC recently reported that its study of state-issued mask mandates between March and December 2020 found that mandates were associated with a paltry 0.7 percentage point decrease in daily COVID-19 death growth rates 1-20 days after implementation, and less than 2% within 21-100 days after implementation. The numbers for case growth were similarly measly. Yet the CDC is absurdly continuing its recommendation for masks.

### **Unchecked Executive Powers is Tyranny**

At this point in the pandemic, the decision-making process to put an end to this sorry affair should not be left to the executive branch. Expanded executive power in times of disaster is not meant to justify an indefinite series of arbitrary and

coercive decrees issued by individual governors, acting in consultation with a team of faceless, unelected, and therefore unaccountable public health officials. Lawmaking authority is vested in the more deliberative and democratic legislative bodies, not the executive. Furthermore, relying on the executive paves the way for petty dictatorships to crop up at the county and municipal level.

### **States Legislatures Get Your Rears in Gear**

Hence, we need state legislatures to take action on masks to curb executive, bureaucratic and even judicial overreach, and represent the will of the people. In republican government, the legislative authority necessarily predominates. If not, we will only ever be one gubernatorial-or mayoral-election, one departmental edict, or one judicial decision away from our right, literally, to breathe freely being once again revoked or suspended based on whim, political expedience, or fear mongering.

Evidently, the dominos are falling, despite consternation from the usual parade of tyrants, fear mongers, and superstitious hypochondriacs. Instead of waiting around for governors and health bureaucrats to allow people to breathe freely again, state legislatures should reinvigorate their constitutional authority, curb overreach and do away with oppressive and scientifically unsupported mask mandates.

Thank You

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