

My name is Zach Lessig and I am a husband, father and veteran. I hold a BS in Biology and an MS in Biology. I have typically worked as a scientific technician for state agencies in Washington state. Please pass HB 1323.

I was very disappointed to see how our country responded, and more importantly, ***continues to respond***, to a virus in a way that adds insult to injury.

I was motivated to move here to North Dakota where my wife grew up because I believe that the government here is guided more by common sense than in many other parts of the country.

I was again disappointed, to have **to remove my daughter from school** and begin homeschooling largely because of mask mandates.

Here is my list of grievances:

- Mask mandates are a violation of personal liberty.
- Masks are dehumanizing especially for kids.
- There are not large differences in covid cases between high mask vs low mask areas. covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view
- To "flatten the curve" means the same number of people will contract a disease just over a longer time period.
- There have been "pandemics" in the past and masks were not called for.

I would like to discuss the last point because it is often overlooked.

Every year the US population deals with cold viruses and influenza viruses which may occasionally reach pandemic levels such as the 2009 H1N1 "swine flu". The current pandemic has had some mystery surrounding it because it is a "novel coronavirus" and this seems to worry people. I want to draw attention to the fact that the SARS outbreak of 2002 and MERS of 2012 were both coronaviruses.

There has been a lot more work in general on coronaviruses than most people realize. In the last ten years there have been almost 8,000 research papers on coronaviruses in scientific journals. statnews.com/2020/02/10/fluctuating-funding-and-flagging-interest-hurt-coronavirus-research/

John Hopkins University has been conducting pandemic simulation exercises for 20 years. In May of 2018 they conducted an exercise known as "Clade X" in which the infectious agent was a "novel coronavirus", and again in Oct of 2019 they simulated "Event 201" which again included a "novel coronavirus" as the infectious agent. These simulations have been largely funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and have garnered enough attention to influence national legislation at times. This is strong evidence to suggest that experts who study pandemics were expecting a novel coronavirus as the most likely agent.

centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/exercises/

It seems then that director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical advisor to the president, Dr. Anthony Fauci had a lot of context last March when he said that, "There is no reason to be walking around with a mask". The CDC later updated its guidance and Dr. Fauci backpedaled on his comments. This illustrates quite plainly that **mask wearing is more about political compliance than biological necessity.**

My children will be homeschooling as long as the threat of dehumanizing practices such as masks are in place.