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Connecticut General Assembly
300 Capitol Avenue, Suite 5500
Hartford, CT 06106

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter today to ask that the Connecticut General Assembly vote against Governor Lamont's request to extend 11 of his emergency orders. Specifically, I urge state lawmakers to vehemently reject Order 13A, which would forcibly mask all of Connecticut's children ages 2 and over. The state is coming up on nearly 2 years under a Covid emergency. That is over 700 days of our children living their lives in states of fear and anxiety; over 250 days of our school children attending school in masks.

I have 4 children who attend school in the state of Connecticut. My youngest is 5-years-old and started kindergarten in September in a mask. Imagine being 5-years-old and riding the bus, walking into a brand new school, surrounded by strangers, all while not being able to see anyone's face? My son has done well with kindergarten and all of the restrictions we have placed on our children—lunch in his classroom where the kids watch a show and “whisper” to each other; indoor gym class on inclement weather days with breathing restricted by a mask; singing in music class in a mask. My son has never known what a normal school experience should be like, and the adults who have continued to vote to force mask our children should be ashamed of themselves. I am ashamed and embarrassed for this state.

Connecticut has proven to be a laggard in the removal of restrictions on our children. Numerous states have unmasked children to no detriment. In fact, in most other states without mask mandates for school children, Covid numbers are virtually the same. Globally, countries across Europe dropped masks long ago, or, better, never put masks on their children. Even the WHO only recommends masking children under certain circumstances—not all the time at the whim of one authority.

With the availability of Covid vaccines and early treatments, the state should feel confident to handle Covid as an endemic that will be with us forever. As such, we need to remove the masks on our children now and allow them to get back to normal life. Or, simply allow us, the parents, the right to choose to mask our children or not. The effects of Covid policies are going to be with us for years to come—our children may never be “normal” as a result of the policies our state government has allowed to continue for nearly 2 years. While the governor enacted the

executive orders that led us to where we are today, it is you, the state legislators that enabled him.

The time is now to rightfully take back the power from the governor. Please vote to end the statewide mask mandate and allow parents to choose what is best for their own children. I thank you for your time and service, and hope that you will do what's right.

Sincerely,
Julia Holthaus

A 5-year-old's mask after 7+ hour

