

To Public Health Committee:

I am writing to oppose the continuance of the Governor's executive powers. It is time to end the permanent state of undemocratic authority and centralized decision-making, which has been especially harmful to our children and young families. It is against the spirit of the CT Constitution for the people's representatives to surrender their legislative powers to the executive branch. Article 1, Section 2 of the CT Constitution states: "***All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit...***" We need to have checks and balances in our state government.

The dangers of the virus are much lower than two years ago when the governor's emergency powers were instituted. We now have vaccines, boosters, medical interventions and therapeutic treatments, which decrease the likelihood of serious infection or death. Instead of mandates, our government should be providing citizens with access to information regarding medical interventions and therapeutics, and empowering the people to make informed decisions about the virus. Government should be supporting the production and availability of all effective treatments.

Decision making needs to be returned to local officials, who should be voting based on the people's input. All communities are different, and each municipality should be able to make decisions appropriate for their respective situation. Our personal freedoms have been usurped, and it is time to restore them to the people of CT.

It is also time to give families the choice of whether their children should wear a mask to school. Children are at a very low risk of dying from the Covid (.0002% chance for children age 5-14, per the CDC.) Children are more likely to die from homicide, suicide, car accidents, heart disease, drownings or influenza, than from Covid.

The masks are causing more harm than good. There is no study or evidence that the masks are helping to reduce the spread of the virus (per CDC), and transmission is lower in schools than across the country at large. Many doctors from renowned medical institutions have said the masks are useless in preventing virus spread, describing them as "facial decorations" and "political theatre."

Data now shows that the masks are causing negative outcomes for students, especially for low-income, ELL and special needs children, including: increased anxiety and depression, increased suicides and self-harm, especially among adolescent girls. Younger students are having trouble acquiring verbal and social skills, and overall test scores are lower.

Our children deserve to see smiling faces. Our students deserve a return to normalcy NOW.

The science has spoken- and it is time to follow the science and return personal freedoms to the people.

Kathleen Randall