

February 7, 2022

Re: Legislative Information Hearing: Continuation of Emergency Declarations and Limited Executive Orders

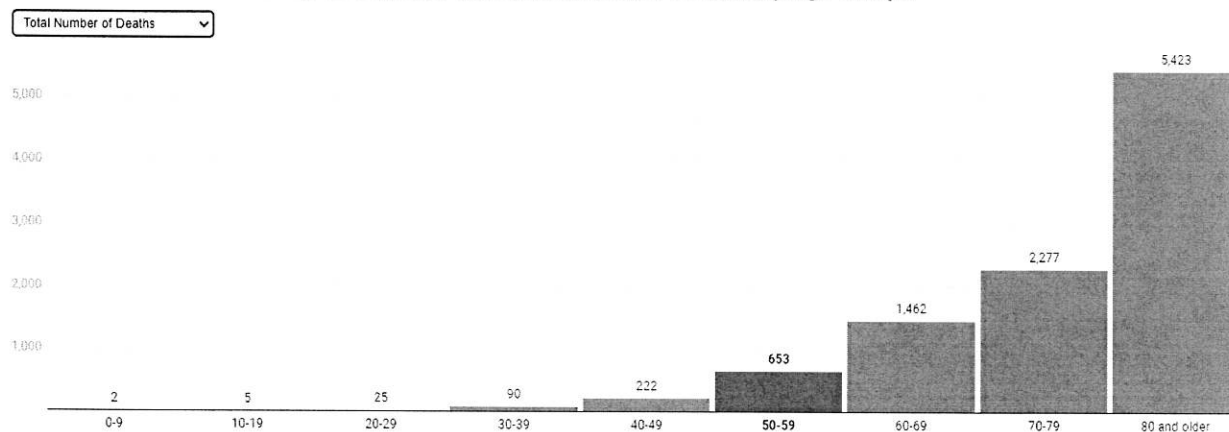
Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in regards to the Continuation of Emergency Declarations and Limited Executive Orders.

I am opposed to the renewing of the governor's emergency orders which expire February 15, 2022. Additionally, I am opposed to proposed legislation to codify Executive Order 9-1, which allows the Connecticut State Department of Education to require masks in schools and childcare facilities and Executive Order 13 which enables the Department of Public Health to impose mask mandates at their discretion. The decision to mask a child should be the choice of the parent(s). Government should not be imposing such mandates. Currently over 75% of Connecticut's population is fully vaccinated and vaccines are available to individuals in the most impacted groups. The number of deaths for our most vulnerable population, the children, is 7 as per the Connecticut Department of Public Health as of today.

Age Group Chart

Number of COVID-19 Cases, Associated Deaths, and Rates per 100,000 by Age Groups



Total COVID-19 cases and associated deaths include confirmed plus probable.

Chart: Ver 5.11.2021 • Source: CT Department of Public Health • Embed • Download image • Created with Datawrapper

This is not a virus that is impacting our kids and our kids are suffering because of the fears of others. Parents know what is best for their children and should be able to make those decisions, not the government. The youngest kids, preschoolers, are in the heart of their development that is the foundation for the rest of their lives. The masks they are being forced to wear is impeding such development. They are falling behind and losing the ability to infer emotion due to the masks. They are falling behind in their ability to learn the alphabet, speech and sound as they can no longer see the mouths of their educators and peers. They are not able to make social connections in a proper manner to foster relationship building. Masks are segregating our youth instead of uniting them.

What is also troubling is the fact that our educators are no longer educating but are policing the wearing of masks in our children causing fear and anxiety which has caused a mental health crisis for our

children. Since when is this ok? When this all began our children were promised mask breaks and access to the outdoors as much as possible. After two years of this there are countless reports of no mask breaks and no outdoor activity, which includes the elimination of recess, in our educational system. When limited outdoor activity is present many are required to wear their masks even on the hottest of days.

Why is it ok for families to go out to a restaurant without a mask but our children have to wear them in school? Why can adults attend concerts and sporting events shoulder to shoulder with thousands unmasked but our children have to wear them for 8 hours with no breaks? Why is it ok for adults to live by different rules than their children? Am I the only one that sees the hypocrisy in this?

Vaccines and methods of protection are available for those who are high risk and want to protect themselves. This should not be the burden of our children. It is time for choice and not mandates.

Respectfully Submitted,



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