

February 8, 2022

Matthew Schmitt  
Enfield, Connecticut

Connecticut Public Health Committee  
RE: Informational Hearing on the Continuation of Emergency Declarations and Limited  
Executive Orders

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing this in OPPOSITION to extending the emergency executive powers.

After nearly two years of declared emergency, it is time for our society, for our state institutions, and for the individual people of Connecticut to live again, without these restrictions. Less democratic nations than ours have recently rolled back their constraints. And many states in our own country had already done so months ago. There is no longer an emergency. It should be obvious to everyone at this stage. The reasoning for these virtually unlimited executive powers has always stood on shaky ground, and now that ground has totally given way.

The mental health problems that these executive orders have created are epic. Yes, the executive orders issued under the emergency powers are a *direct* cause of a societal problem that looks to take years, perhaps decades, to overcome. It should have been evident from the outset that one cannot live under a perpetual state of anxiety, yet that is what we have normalized and what some still seem to desire. If the emergency powers do not end now, then when? What is on the horizon to end the emergency in the eyes of those advocating a continuation of these measures? We tried lockdowns. We tried masks. We tried vaccines (even in children who are at little risk). We tried boosters. We tried coercion. Duress. Threats. Arrests. And fines. And yet we still experienced one of the greatest waves of Covid recently, despite all of these executive orders and their subsequent restraints on civil liberties. What is left in the governor's arsenal? The answer is clear: Nothing. The governor, at this point, is impotent in the face of Covid. The emergency powers need to be removed; the executive orders lifted.

Further, there are lessons to be learned from our recent experiment. The State should never commandeer local political structures. The State should never develop discriminatory software for businesses to use against patrons. The State should never subject certain classes of people to unwarranted testing, or to threaten, with unjustifiable mandates, the livelihoods of the nurses, doctors, teachers, and many others who we so recently praised. We have stood witness to the dark side of what the broad exercise of emergency powers can bring. It has gone on far too long and they have come down far too hard. End the emergency powers now, before more damage can be done, and so we can begin to correct the destructive effects that many of the orders have created in, what we used to be proud to call, our Constitution State.