

February 7, 2022

Dear Legislators,

I support the continuation of the Emergency Declaration and Limited Executive Orders. To me, it is not complicated. We must protect the weakest among us, and with this awful disease, we cannot even be completely sure who they are.

We hear that it's time to return to normalcy. Well, I'd sure love that, but nothing is normal yet, and wishing does not make it so. Things have not been normal for nearly two years. It stinks for everyone in so many ways, and going through yet another month of a Covid-19 surge during a dreary February only makes it harder. We all wish that this awful disease would just disappear, but we don't know what will happen next, and we can't pretend that everything is just fine.

It makes sense to live as normal a life as is safe for each of us, depending on how we each view our own risk factors. We can do that without forgetting that our friends, relatives, and neighbors are often more at risk, and that we can live our lives in a way that does not endanger others. As we continue to figure out how to live with this horrible disease that has killed and harmed so many, I ask you to keep the well-being of all, especially the most vulnerable, at the forefront of your legislative decision-making.

There are easy ways to do that, such as keeping the option of no-excuse absentee ballots. There are so many groups who are at risk, and the mystery of Covid is that there are also those who get terribly sick or die who are not in one of those groups. So many people have had to minimize or avoid being in public places to try to remain safe and healthy, or to keep a vulnerable family member safe. The least we can do is lend a helping hand by doing the easy things, and one of those is keeping the option of no-excuse absentee voting for all. It is so unfair to those who have had to live the most restrictive lives during this pandemic to also take away their right to vote because of fear of getting sick after voting in a crowded polling place.

The Governor's emergency powers should continue so that he can continue to act quickly during a time that is unfortunately still a health emergency, as we have seen from the illnesses and deaths during this Omicron surge. He has been able to deal with events as they unfold, and has done so by consulting the Department of Public Health and other experts. Each of our cities and towns is not inside a protective bubble, and so there have been times during this pandemic when cities and towns have been able to safely decide their own levels of caution, and times when that won't work as well because the whole state is at risk. For now, we continue to need leadership that has an overview of the Covid situation in Connecticut and that can act decisively at any given moment when the situation is still constantly changing.

Thank you for considering my written testimony.

Meira Rosenberg  
Stamford, Connecticut