

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to testify in opposition to Governor Lamont's Extended orders. I am a teacher and a mother of four school-aged children, some of which were "Grandfathered in" in order to remain in school based on our religious beliefs and informed medical decisions. Our children were 'the lucky ones' considering how the bill split up so many families and ran others from the state. I have been in the Medical Freedom movement for too long and realize the 'legislative creep' that occurred as these bills passed. We saw it again when Governor Lamont extended his orders for a false "state of emergency" when this pandemic hit our state. There was no emergency then when they removed the Religious Exemption to Childhood Vaccinations for School (as healthy children have never been a threat), and there is no emergency now as Governor Lamont intends to enforce more draconian measures on the citizens of Connecticut with his extension of powers.

As an public school elementary school teacher of over 20 years, I see what these mask and mandates are doing to our students. Knowing how teaching used to be as compared to now is absolutely absurd. As an ESL teacher, it is essential that my students see the articulation of sounds as my mouth performs them. I also need to see their faces. After teaching behind masks for so long, I feel I am being a disservice to my students by not being able to have them understand me and vice versa. Last month, we were told we were having our first open house via zoom. When my first student came to the screen with her father, I could not hold back the tears. I cried right in front of them both because I had never seen her beautiful face until that night. I could not help myself. I had to explain my emotional state, but they both understood. We laughed and went on with the meeting. My point here is that these students are living in fear in both school and in society - fear of a virus that has a 99% survival rate. As an educator, we are personally responsible for the care of every individual student in the school. It is terrifying to me that I would not be able to recognize my own school's students on the street or in society with their masks off! behind masks, it is like they do not have faces at all! Moreover, at dismissal time - which happens to be the most stressful part of each day- it could be *any* adult that is receiving these children if we are not diligent about checking identification first because the adults are **masked, too!** It's absolutely horrifying to think that we may be sending these little ones off with someone they or we do not know. These vaccine and harmful masking mandates are being pushed from every direction; from an opportunity to win tickets to a concert to being able to sit on Santa's lap and receive a candy cane all if children come to get their "free" vaccine. And suddenly, anyone who is anyone could become an "Ambassador for the Covid-19 Vaccine." What an honorable title! Honestly, I'd rather do my own research and make my own decisions for my family and myself, thank you very much. The push for the CV vaccine has so many families feeling their hands are tied. These measures are causing so much more harm than good, most of which unfortunately will be irreversible as it settles in to the minds of our children. This is not freedom or the American way, and it could all stop here.

My own children complain of headaches at the end of each day. While they try to get fresh air, teachers suddenly feel that they are the dictators of our children's health and can force them to keep them on. In addition, our children return from school also knowing much about their teachers' vaccine status as those individuals feel it is perfectly fine to announce that they may be "absent" because they are getting their CV shot, or that they aren't feeling well because they just got their booster. Our seven-year-old came home a few months ago saying that her teacher was getting her shot, and then announced how happy she was because "they could all get theirs now, too!" as the CDC had just "authorized", (not "approved") it for 5-year-olds and up. This was followed by "Circle Time" where, in years gone by, second graders would share their favorite food or what they did over the weekend, but were now discussing when they were getting their Covid-19 shots. Have we all gone mad? Our sixth grade daughter and seventh-grade son witnessed similar situations in their classes, and our oldest, who is a sophomore, sat for over 10 minutes at the end of one class period listening to his teacher and a paraprofessional discussing, quite loudly, their shots and reactions to them. This is personal medical information adults should know not to share or have shared, but worse than that, they are influencing young children thinking this is just fine. My husband and I, among many other infuriated parents, have gone to numerous Board of Education meetings, and have had many calls and zoom meetings with our Superintendent about these matters. He has stated that he would remind those professionals to keep such talk out of the classroom, but it has become such normalcy that our young children have to be the

ones to clarify to their teachers the inappropriateness of such conversations. Professionalism needs to be maintained in all classrooms and in society. People ought to be reading more than turning on their televisions and simply "listening" without doing their own research. The masking of a child is abuse, especially when science shows that these useless garments do little to nothing to control the spread of a virus that we now know is much too small to have such fabric contain those particles. There is so much at stake in continuing these mandates, and just as a parent should be the ultimate decision-maker in the health of their children, a parent should be able to decide whether or not his or her children should be injected with an experimental technology or masked in school or anywhere at all.

For much of the information just given from a teacher and a mother's personal perspective, I believe it would be an abuse of power to have Governor Lamont extend his orders yet again placing our youth in harm's way. The mandates need to disappear, children need to be children again, sports and activities need to be revived with a sense of safety in knowing that fresh air is actually ok, and that a parent's choice supersedes a government's rule. Please take all of this into consideration when voting to extend his orders. From one human to another - think of our children and the futures we want for them.

Sincerely,

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