

Scott and Kristen Durocher
4 Reed Hill Road
Granby, CT 06035

February 7, 2022

DELIVERED VIA EMAIL

Representative Mark Anderson
Legislative Office Building, Room 4052
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Request for Written Testimony on Informational Hearing on the Continuation of Emergency Declarations and Limited Executive Orders

Dear Representative Anderson:

We are writing today in response to your request for comment with respect to the governor's orders in preparation for the informational hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 8, 2022. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

As we sit down to write this, it's astonishing that we must formally advocate for the restoration of basic common-sense measures in our schools. We respectfully request – no, we DEMAND – the ending of ALL Covid related restrictions in our schools.

It has been two years. We have done our part. We dutifully adhered to lockdown measures, we wore our masks, we got our shots and social distanced when asked. We now ask that for the sake of our children's' futures, we allow them to live normal lives.

The stadiums are packed. Restaurants and bars are packed. Time and time again we see pictures of our leaders in crowded public settings, not wearing masks then making absurd excuses and apologies. The last place masks are required is in our schools, even though children face the least risk of bad outcomes from the virus. Why do we continue to place the burden of this pandemic on our children?

The U.S. Surgeon General has declared children's mental health a national emergency. We have two children in the Granby public schools, ages nine and six. They are required to wear masks seven hours a day, are isolated from their friends, and are made to eat lunch outside in the rain in 40-degree weather. What are we doing?

Our son is in first grade. He doesn't know life at Kelly Lane Primary School without a mask. He is behind in both his reading and math. We know kids need to see faces to develop speech. Yet we seem indifferent to the downsides of masking and other social restrictions. We have seen no cost benefit analysis or scientific basis for these restrictions. The medical community has admitted cloth masks are useless. Vaccines and N95 masks are now widely available for anyone that wants them. We should focus on protecting the mental health of children and let them live their lives!

Our daughter is fairing a bit better as she was able to develop some basic reading and math skills before Covid, nevertheless we can see she is struggling. She came home one day and said her teacher is now wearing an N95. I asked her if she could hear her teacher speak. She said, "kind of." She is isolated from

her friends and seems unhappy when we pick her up. She tells us the kids are misbehaving and are beginning to act out. All likely in response to the constant repression they are experiencing daily and the micromanaging of every aspect of their lives. She tells us they have few mask breaks during the day and are assigned one friend to eat lunch with. This is madness. We could see doing this temporarily, but now two years later this makes no sense.

We need to find an off ramp for these restrictions. That time is now! Not only is it imperative that we lift these mandates immediately, but we need to focus on restoring representative government. The Governors emergency powers lasted far too long. Inevitably there will be further mutations and new diseases, but we must ensure that the harmful lockdown policies and mandates never return!

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Scott and Kristen Durocher