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Emergency Orders Public Testimony

As a resident and a member of a large family of Connecticut residents, I believe the upholding of these orders can do great good for people of our state. All of us listening today are very lucky to be seeing glimpses of the end of the pandemic . But let us not forget those who weren't so lucky. Whether or not you believe it's time for the people of Connecticut to begin restoring, piecemeal, the life we knew before, we need to learn from the path we've taken to get to where we are today.

Even when all's well a year from now, 5 years from now, 10 years from now; we need not forget the lesson we were reminded of in the spring of 2020: Pandemics can, and will happen in the modern world, if not in our lifetimes, in our children's or our children's children. We've learned what it takes through the trials of this century and the last what it takes to get through them, and first and foremost that is the collaboration and cooperation of people. Real people. People doing what they can to keep each other safe in hopes they'll both be able to live past it and meet again on the other side.

But with the overwhelming collaboration we've seen, there's also been disagreements. People who confuse their right to "freedom" with the right to put other people in danger. Keep in mind, wearing a mask first and foremost is for the protection of others, not oneself. We've seen a vast majority of thoughtful and agreeable friends and neighbors cooperate in this simple exchange, but we know too that some will not. This, fundamentally, is the reason we have laws and rules in our society at all: almost all people in our community will act according to common decency, but others will not. And when it comes to protecting the people of our state from the tail end of this pandemic or, God forbid, the next, do we want to leave ourselves worse off than in March of 2020? What is the trade here? Preventing our own officials and medical experts from protecting ourselves and our children, in exchange for what? To not be told what to do? Think of your children doing something dangerous just because you told them not to do it; just to break the rules you set. I ask you, is that what "freedom" means to you? Or is freedom the lives we lead together as a community of citizens looking out for neighbors and family and friends?

I hope that we are able to take the lessons we've lived through and learned over the course of these last two years to heart and remember that the cooperation we participated in saved the lives of everyone with us today. And that these lessons can make us better prepared for tomorrow.

Thank you for your time.