



MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

August 26, 2021

Tom Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building

*** HAND DELIVERED***

Dear Governor Wolf:

We are writing in response to your letter today where you ask that we return to voting session to consider legislation mandating the use of masks for schools and childcare centers.

Like you, we are disappointed in the current rise in COVID-19 cases especially given the advances and availability of vaccines and other treatment protocols and mitigation options.

We, along with many of our colleagues, have seen data and received firsthand accounts from our healthcare leaders on exactly what is happening in Pennsylvania and specifically in our home areas and regions for much of the summer.

During that same time period, you and members of your administration have made it publicly known that you would not impose any additional statewide mandates and instead allow mitigation decisions to be made at a local level.

Your letter today is a stark departure from that position.

At this late date, in many of our communities, local leaders have already made important decisions they believe are in the best interest of their residents and are prepared to adjust those decisions as challenges evolve.

One of the most effective ways we can all mitigate COVID-19, is to continue to urge those who can get vaccinated to do so in the interest of their own health, and the health of their neighbors and community members.

We believe that the current approach – allowing local officials to manage and respond as needed – makes the most sense and should be continued.

One of the frustrations many local officials, some of which you reference in your letter to us, have is the lack of clear data that can meaningfully assist them in determining threat levels in their areas.

For example, we have asked for improved data from our state health officials regarding current case counts and exactly who is being the most impacted. It is our understanding the overwhelming majority of the hospitalized patients in Pennsylvania are *unvaccinated individuals*, which according to CDC recommendations *should already be wearing a mask*.

We once again ask for the data relating to new COVID-19 cases to be delineated according to the number of infections diagnosed in individuals who are unvaccinated as well as infections diagnosed in individuals who are vaccinated. All Pennsylvanians – both vaccinated and unvaccinated - need to know how their respective group is performing.

The rise in new cases within the state and across the country is a clear reminder that we must always be vigilant. However, the impact is not equal everywhere. That is why we continue to believe it is the best interest of local communities and their healthcare leaders to make their own mitigation decisions with support from the state, which includes clear and specific data upon which to make the best choices.

Thank you for your willingness to work with the General Assembly. Together, we hopefully will make the best possible choices for our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Cutler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jake Lorman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.