



# UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

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July 14, 2020

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert  
Governor of Utah  
350 North State Street, Suite 200, PO Box 142220  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2220

Governor Herbert:

We urge you to issue a statewide mandate for masks and other protective actions for certain high-risk facilities, as directed by our public health officials, to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. Nearly half of the deaths so far in Utah have been people in long-term care facilities, and two-thirds of Utah's long-term care centers have experienced a coronavirus case. Clearly, our loved ones who are at-risk continue to be very vulnerable to this disease, as is anyone residing or working in facilities where close contact with other individuals is commonplace.

Last week, the leaders of Utah's largest healthcare providers asked for your leadership in mandating masks throughout the state. In the face of a dangerous spike in the number of cases and with our hospital ICUs getting dangerously close to capacity, we agree with their assessment. If you are unwilling to take that decisive action to save lives, we ask you to at least show leadership in providing this common sense measure to protect those most at risk in our state.

Long-term care facilities are now required by Utah Department of Health guidelines to have policies for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), but facility staff are not mandated to wear masks. This is an area where clear industry standards exist and one in which your leadership is sorely needed. The recent outbreak at the Four Corners Region

Care Center has shown that not all facilities in our state may be taking guidelines seriously or taking proper precautions.

We are deeply concerned about the continuing spread of the Coronavirus across our state and in our communities. We have already seen that when you have acted with stronger, clearer guidelines, more Utahns respond. Continuing that type of leadership will allow fewer to be sickened and die, and our state to recover with more speed and vitality. Please, our state needs your leadership, now more than ever.

Respectfully,

Utah Senate and House Democratic Caucuses

Senator Gene Davis

Representative Sandra Hollins

Senator Luz Escamilla

Representative Brian King

Senator Jani Iwamoto

Representative Karen Kwan

Senator Derek Kitchen

Representative Carol Spackman Moss

Senator Karen Mayne

Representative Stephanie Pitcher

Senator Kathleen Riebe

Representative Marie Poulson

Representative Patrice Arent

Representative Angela Romero

Representative Joel Briscoe

Representative LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff

Representative Jennifer Dailey-Provost

Representative Andrew Stoddard

Representative Sue Duckworth

Representative Elizabeth Weight

Representative Suzanne Harrison

Representative Mark Wheatley