



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882

February 4, 2021

Governor Tony Evers
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707
DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Governor Evers,

As we began 2021, we were hopeful your administration would work with us on some of the serious issues that plagued Wisconsin during 2020. Wisconsin's vaccine rollout has been poorly planned and executed, the Department of Workforce Development has continually failed the unemployed in Wisconsin and the state's response to COVID has been disorganized and poorly communicated. We again confirm our willingness to work with you on each of these issues in the hope of finding long-term bipartisan solutions.

When the pandemic began last year, we worked cooperatively with your administration and our Democratic colleagues to pass bipartisan legislation that contained over 55 provisions that gave you the tools to help deal with the virus and assist those who were suffering from the economic devastation of Wisconsin's response.

Instead of continuing to work together to repeat our bipartisan work the month before, in May 2020 you chose to issue an Executive Order without any meaningful consultation with the state Legislature. Your decision had devastating economic effects on hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites. If allowed to stand, your lockdown of small businesses and restaurants last year would have decimated the state economy.

One only has to look at many of our neighboring states to see the devastating impact your order would have had, if Republicans in the Legislature had not acted to overturn your unlawful and irrational emergency orders. After the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned your illegal executive overreach, we again asked you to work with us by submitting your COVID-19 plan through the rules process to the Legislature so we could cooperatively work on the state's response, but you again refused.

In three different instances, we have asked to work together and you chose a go-it-alone approach that ultimately was unlawful and damaging to the citizens of the state of Wisconsin.

The citizens of Wisconsin are sick and tired of your go-it-alone approach. We therefore are writing to respectfully ask you to change course and work within the established system to legally enact rules that will keep those who are vulnerable safe and also protect the rights of our citizens to live their lives.

As we have said for months, the vote the Assembly will be taking today is not about your mask order. State law is incredibly clear that you may issue an Executive Order for 60 days but after that time, you must seek approval from the Legislature to continue the Public Health Emergency.

Over the course of last spring and fall, members of our caucus, including members of the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) reached out both publicly and privately to your office and the Department of Health Services with the goal of working together on the rules process. While you appreciated the offer, you refused to work with us on the state response to the coronavirus, which is why we are once again renewing our request for you to work with us to address these important issues through the necessary legal avenues.

The Wisconsin state law does not allow the Legislature to introduce rules for adoption. Only a governor or their agencies may do that action. We therefore are asking you to please introduce rules to the Legislature for our review that will do the following:

- 1) Enact reasonable masking requirements in places in Wisconsin that are susceptible to transmission of the virus to those who are especially vulnerable, such as health care facilities, nursing homes, mass transit, state government buildings, assisted living facilities, public schools, universities, and prisons.
- 2) Allow any private or public entity in the state that would like to require face masking to be allowed to do so on their property.
- 3) Require the Department of Health Services to pay for COVID-19 tests that anyone may take, free of charge, paid for by the state of Wisconsin.
- 4) The rules would be in place and reviewed by JCRAR every 30 days for any necessary modifications and would stay in place until a majority of eligible Wisconsinites are voluntarily vaccinated.

We hope you take this letter as a sincere attempt to find common ground and end the public bickering that has frustrated so many in our state.

If you send the rules to our chamber, we give you our assurance that they will be reviewed fairly and judiciously. Our goal would be to have the rules become effective before our floor period in February so when the unlawful public health order is overturned, there will not be any gap in the masking requirement for those spaces where we can agree face coverings provide the most benefit for our residents.

Sincerely,



Rep. Robin J. Vos
Assembly Speaker



Rep. Jim Steineke
Majority Leader



Rep. Tyler August
Speaker Pro-Tempore



Rep. Kevin Petersen
Assistant Majority Leader



Rep. Tyler Vorpagel
Majority Caucus Chair



Rep. Cindi Duchow
Majority Caucus Vice-Chair



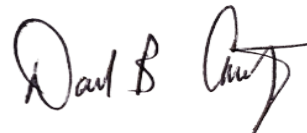
Rep. Jesse James
Majority Caucus Secretary



Rep. Samantha Kerkman
Caucus Sergeant at Arms



Rep. Scott Allen
97th Assembly District



Rep. David Armstrong
75th Assembly District



Rep. Mark Born
39th Assembly District



Rep. Janel Brandtjen
22nd Assembly District



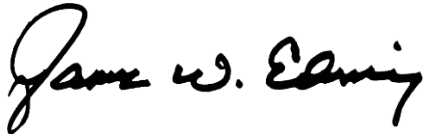
Rep. Robert Brooks
60th Assembly District



Rep. Calvin Callahan
35th Assembly District



Rep. Alex Dallman
41st Assembly District



Rep. James Edming
87th Assembly District



Rep. Terry Katsma
26th Assembly District



Rep. Rachael Cabral-Guevara
55th Assembly District



Rep. Mike Kuglitsch
84th Assembly District



Rep. Amy Loudenbeck
31st Assembly District



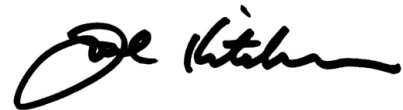
Rep. Gae Magnafici
28th Assembly District



Rep. Barbara Dittrich
38th Assembly District



Rep. Rick Gundrum
58th Assembly District



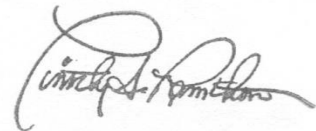
Rep. Joel Kitchens
1st Assembly District



Rep. Scott Krug
72nd Assembly District



Rep. Tony Kurtz
50th Assembly District



Rep. Timothy Ramthun
59th Assembly District



Rep. Clint Moses
29th Assembly District



Rep. Dave Murphy
56th Assembly District



Rep. Adam Neylon
98th Assembly District



Rep. Loren Oldenburg
96th Assembly District



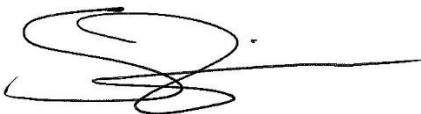
Rep. Jon Plumer
42nd Assembly District



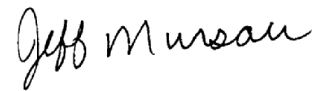
Rep. Jessie Rodriguez
21st Assembly District



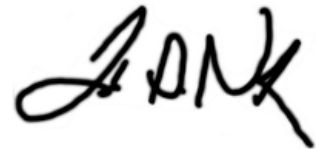
Rep. Joe Sanfelippo
15th Assembly District



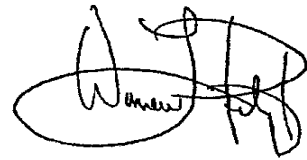
Rep. Shannon Zimmerman
30th Assembly District



Rep. Jeffrey Mursau
36th Assembly District



Rep. Todd Novak
51st Assembly District



Rep. Warren Petryk
93rd Assembly District



Rep. Treig Pronschinske
92nd Assembly District



Rep. Donna Rozar
69th Assembly District



Rep. Michael Schraa
53rd Assembly District



Rep. Pat Snyder
85th Assembly District



Rep. Shae Sortwell
2nd Assembly District



Rep. John Spiros
86th Assembly District



Rep. David Steffen
4th Assembly District



Rep. Rob Summerfield
67th Assembly District



Rep. Rob Swearingen
34th Assembly District



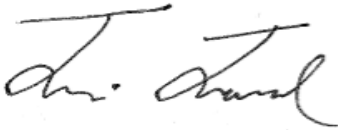
Rep. Gary Tauchen
6th Assembly District



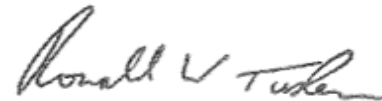
Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt
52nd Assembly District



Rep. Paul Tittel
25th Assembly District



Rep. Travis Tranel
49th Assembly District



Rep. Ron Tusler
3rd Assembly District



Rep. Nancy VanderMeer
70th Assembly District



Rep. Chuck Wichgers
83rd Assembly District



Rep. Robert Wittke
62nd Assembly District