



Municipality of Anchorage

Dave Bronson
Mayor

Senior Citizens Advisory Commission

September 24, 2021

Mayor Dave Bronson
632 W. 6th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mayor Bronson,

The first purpose of the SCAC is to “advise the Mayor, the Assembly, and appropriate Department Heads concerning aspects of aging which bear upon the welfare of senior citizens”. When you made an appearance at the August meeting of the Senior Advisory Commission at the Senior Activity Center, we were pleased to hear you say that you wanted your administration to take a more active role working with us. However, we need you to take an active role in protecting Anchorage’s seniors. Part of protecting our most vulnerable population is masking. While the studies you cited fit your needs there are more complete studies that unequivocally show validity in masking.

The masks are not to keep you from getting covid, they are to keep you from spreading your germs.

It is our understanding that the Anchorage Senior Activity Center has asked for an exemption so that the ASAC can make masks mandatory in that facility. We feel strongly that this measure will make our seniors feel safer and recommend that you grant their request.

We would like to join the growing list of individuals and organizations who are asking you to safeguard the health of seniors by instituting an indoor mask mandate for the city. As this is being written more than 675 thousand Americans have died of Covid 19 – about as many as the 1918-19 Spanish flu. We are scared.

Just a few months ago, we felt safe enough to gather for our first in-person meeting in eighteen months. That safe feeling has disappeared, and we will be meeting virtually once again.

American thespian, David Byrne, summed up our feelings when he said that being together enables a group social experience that lets everyone transcend themselves for a moment, becoming part of a larger group. It might be a musical performance, sporting event, religious ceremony, or group meeting. Much of who we are is what happens when we are together with other people. When we are denied this experience, we are not quite whole. We want to capture that experience, that part of ourselves again. We were starting to find the collective joy

that we missed. Now, we feel that a part of us has been taken away again because we fear the rising number of infections.

To reiterate the reasons that have been given for a return to the mask mandate seems futile given your staunch position. We would like to remind you of the adage: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Credible science supporting our position is available. The steps you have taken to provide treatment fall short when the supply chain fails. We would rather you prevent the spread of the disease than have our seniors suffer through side effects and treatment.

We as a committee understand your personal opinions are different than the healthcare professionals and our ask. However, this isn't meant to be a personal position but a position to protect the citizens in Anchorage that we all know and love.

Regards,

Senior Citizen Advisory Commission

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