



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Rep. Ohnstad, 608-266-0455

Mask Requirement Maintained

MADISON - Despite a scheduled vote today that would have repealed the state's current COVID-19 emergency mask requirement, the Assembly Republican majority removed the proposal from consideration after hours of delay without taking a vote. The resolution had passed the Senate earlier this week despite bipartisan opposition, but it was subsequently noted that the action would have cost Wisconsin over \$49.3 million a month in federal food assistance funding.

In response, Representative Tod Ohnstad (D-Kenosha) provided the following statement:

"Until vaccines can be widely distributed, masks are the best protection we have to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. While the attempted repeal was unwise to begin with, it is positive that the vote did not go forward today and I am hopeful that cooler heads can prevail on this issue.

The Legislature should be focused on how to protect the medical and financial well-being of our citizens, not undermining our state's efforts and jeopardizing the health of our families. Put simply, masks save lives.

Emergency protections need to be in place as long as an emergency persists. The pandemic was not a single event that happened once last March. It has been an ongoing and compounding public health crisis that requires continued adequate response. Rejecting proven protections would only harm and delay the return to normal we all look toward. Fortunately, if the state requirement were to be lifted by a future vote, Kenosha would maintain the requirement under a separate local emergency ordinance requiring masks in public."

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