



Media Release

For Immediate Release
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Assembly Democrats Request Immediate Public Hearing on Statewide Mask Order Legislation

MADISON- On Wednesday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Governor Evers' statewide health emergency order and associated mask mandate, leaving no statewide public health orders remaining in place. Yesterday, Assembly Democrats sent a letter to the Chair and Vice-chair of the Assembly Committee of State Affairs and Assembly legislative leadership to request an immediate public hearing on Assembly Bill 88, legislation to enact a statewide mask order.

Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) released the following statement:

"There has been a growing sense of hope in the air lately as more and more people are becoming eligible for and receiving their safe, free, and effective COVID-19 vaccine. While we are all eager to return to a sense of normalcy, we are not out of the woods just yet. According to the CDC, people who are fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks in public spaces. While the state Department of Health Services projects that this summer may bring herd immunity, we have to keep getting more shots in arms and following the public health guidelines to prevent the spread of the virus. Wednesday's court decision left our state without any statewide health orders in place, a dangerous gamble at a time when new, more transmissible COVID-19 variants are popping up and circulating in our state.

"My colleagues and I introduced legislation earlier this year to enact a statewide mask order because we know that mask wearing is one of the simplest and most effective things we can do to slow the transmission of COVID-19. We also know that official statewide orders offer certainty and consistency to everyone and significantly influence the number of people who wear masks in public and the number of businesses willing to enforce mask wearing.

"When Republican legislators voted to end the state's public health emergency, they claimed that it wasn't about masks. It's time for them to prove it. They can and should call a public hearing on legislation to enact a statewide mask mandate. We believe that the public, as well as our public health experts, scientists, and frontline healthcare heroes deserve the opportunity to weigh in, and that's why we are asking for a hearing on Assembly Bill 88 as soon as possible."

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Note: A copy of the letter mentioned above is attached