



State of New Hampshire

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCORD

May 14, 2020

Governor Sununu,

As steps are taken to begin the reopening of New Hampshire's economy under Stay At Home 2.0, adherence to public health guidelines has become more essential than ever. Wearing a mask or cloth face covering in public has been recognized by the CDC and NH public health experts as a critical step that individuals can take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and we believe that an order temporarily requiring face coverings in public is necessary for the successful reopening of New Hampshire's economy.

Many states across the U.S., including border states Maine and Massachusetts, have established mandatory mask-wearing orders in conjunction with the calculated reopening of their businesses. These orders, which only apply when someone is unable to socially distance in public, are necessary to protect the public and give people confidence that they can go out safely, without increased risk of infection.

We will only have one opportunity to bring New Hampshire's economy back to full strength, so we must get it right the first time. If reopening New Hampshire results in a new wave of infection, the public health and economic damage will likely be too strong for many small businesses and institutions to overcome.

People will not feel comfortable frequenting businesses, and employees will not feel safe returning to work, if clear and practical guidelines to reduce the risk of infection are not established. Given recent attempts to denigrate and politicize the concept of mask wearing as a violation of personal freedom, consistent guidelines will be imperative to the success of Stay At Home 2.0 and future reopening efforts.

While inaction will be viewed as tacit permission to ignore the guidelines that are so necessary to our economic rebound, adopting this commonsense order will protect public health and uphold the regional unity needed for a strong economic reopening across New England.

There should be no pride in impeding the success of New Hampshire's reopening by refusing to temporarily require facial coverings in public. Citizens and business owners alike need to feel that it is safe to engage in the economy for this to work. Please join states across America that have positioned their reopening for success by adopting this necessary temporary order.

Signed,

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Deputy Majority Leader Marjorie Porter - Hillsborough District 1
Representative Michael Abbott - Cheshire District 1
Representative Richard Abel - Grafton District 13
Representative Susan Almy - Grafton District 13
Representative Debra Altschiller - Rockingham District 19
Representative Robert Backus - Hillsborough District 19



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Representative Bruce Cohen - Hillsborough District 28
Representative Patricia Cornell - Hillsborough District 18
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Representative Roger Dontonville - Grafton District 10
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