

**Kristin Robbins**  
**State Representative**



**Minnesota**  
**House of**  
**Representatives**

**District 34A**

January 6, 2021

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Governor of Minnesota  
130 State Capitol  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz,

We write to you today with an urgent request for you to reconsider your regulations in Executive Order 20-99 requiring youth, aged eighteen and younger, to wear a face covering while participating in sporting events. Guidance provided by Center of Disease Control, the World Health Organization, and other leading research institutions agree that face coverings during youth sporting events pose a potential health risk to participants and may cause more harm than the intended good.

The World Health Organization states “children should not wear a mask when playing sports or doing physical activity, such as running, jumping or playing on the playground so that it doesn’t compromise their breathing.”<sup>1</sup> Wearing a mask that covers a child’s nose and mouth during high intensity exercise could lead to fainting, hyperventilation, or vomiting. The Center for Disease Control explains, saying that all “people engaged in high intensity training activities, like running, may not be able to wear a mask if it causes difficulty breathing.”<sup>2</sup>

The data on COVID-19 spread among children indicates that transmission rates are incredibly low and an overwhelming majority of children who contract COVID-19 display mild symptoms and recover quickly. Furthermore, household and community spread from children is minimal. In an article published in December from the University of Minnesota’s Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy<sup>3</sup>, data shows that children are unlikely to be the source of COVID-19 household outbreaks and are even less likely to be infected by another household member.

We have heard from many youth coaches and parents in our districts who find this mask mandate unworkable and outright harmful to their players. Many students with asthma or other conditions, who otherwise would have participated in sports, will no longer be able to do so. They are following their doctors’ advice that wearing a mask during strenuous exercise could have adverse health consequences for them. These kids really want and need the fun, stress relief, and sense of accomplishment that comes from playing sports and feel they are unfairly harmed by these regulations.

Please follow the guidance of the WHO and the CDC and remove the mask mandate for youth sports. This regulation placed on children is not only burdensome but also ineffective in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Rep. Kristin Robbins

Minority Leader Kurt Daudt

Representative Barb Haley

CC: Commissioner Jan Malcolm

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/12/kids-likely-not-driving-household-covid-19-outbreaks>

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