

From: [Valerie Bratcher](#)
To: [Public Testimony](#)
Subject: Freedom of Choice re: Masks
Date: Thursday, August 5, 2021 7:23:55 AM

Good Morning-

I have previously called and emailed many of you. I have expressed my strong opinion that masks should be by freedom of choice and not forced. Our city appears to be in a surge right now but hospitals are not overwhelmed and people are not dying at the same rate compared to this past winter. It appears what we are going through is akin to a bad flu season.

The media would like us to believe hospitals, specifically Children's Mercy, is overrun with Covid patients. I spoke with a respiratory therapist employed there on Monday who stated at that time there were 3 covid patients in the PICU and 11 others hospitalized. She also stated that during the lockdown last spring over 500 CMH staff members were laid off and only half have been re-hired. So "capacity" might be due to decreased employment not brimming to the seams with patients.

I attended the Clay County Health department meeting on Monday evening. An OSHA certified plumber spoke and stated that current home code does not allow water in a washing machine to become hot enough to kill the COVID virus- therefore washing these cloth masks does NOTHING! If you are anything like me I wash everything on cold and then hang dry so the mask doesn't shrink to doll size.

I work as an occupational therapist in the NKC school district. Do you know the CDC recommends 60 mins of vigorous exercise per day for children? Why don't we mandate that standard? Kids would be much more healthy with physical activity included regularly in their day.

NKC students have many indoor recess days in August and September due to the high heat index. Elementary students may only get a 20 min mask break (lunch) during an entire school day if recess is held indoors due to a high heat index. Might be even less than 20 mins if the student eats fast as the adult in charge barks at them to put back on.

I implore you to think of the bigger picture and vote to overturn the Mayor's mandate. Our children deserve better.

Sincerely,

Valerie Bratcher
Resident of District 1