

**Minnesota House
of Representatives**



**Senate
State of Minnesota**

State of Minnesota

August 18, 2021

Jerry Hammer
Minnesota State Fair
1265 Snelling Ave North
Saint Paul, MN 55108

Dear Mr. Hammer:

The Minnesota State Fair is a beloved event that so many Minnesotans are looking forward to. However, given that we are in the midst of a global pandemic, we call on you to implement policies that will protect the health and safety of Minnesotans across the state. The gold standard would be to require all attendees be vaccinated, but short of that, we ask that you set a clear and strong policy requiring masks for all attendees.

The State Fair is set to open in the midst of plateauing vaccination rates and surging cases of COVID-19 due to the Delta variant. As the “Great Minnesota Get Together,” the State Fair is set to bring people from all corners of the state together to one location. Without mitigation strategies like masking, it will contribute to the already rapid transmission of COVID-19 to communities throughout the state.

Because the traditional start of school coincides with the State Fair, the combination of these two important events adds undue risk for students, educators, and staff who want and need to return to the classroom. Universal masking will provide Minnesotans with confidence that they can attend safely; without this attendance will surely suffer.

While risk of COVID-19 spreading may be reduced by the outdoor nature of much of the State Fair, there are many indoor areas that will pose a great risk to unmasked individuals, and current CDC recommendations include masking in areas with high COVID-19 cases in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with close contact with others who are unvaccinated. The Delta variant of COVID-19 has been proven to be capable of spreading amongst vaccinated

populations as well, so limiting mask requirements to unvaccinated individuals would be insufficient. A universal mask policy is an important and necessary mitigation strategy to prevent this year's State Fair from becoming a super-spreader event and to protect Minnesotans across the state, including kids under 12 who are not yet eligible for vaccinations. We want to ensure this cherished event is a safe place for every Minnesotan.

Many states across the U.S. are straining under the burden of the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19. We are watching healthcare colleagues work to exhaustion fighting this pandemic and asking for our help and support in that fight. We have the knowledge, foresight, and ability to ensure the safety of Minnesotans and integrity of our healthcare system. In Minnesota, we look out for each other, and right now, that means wearing a mask to protect our family, friends, and neighbors. Let us not be guided by the emotion or politics of the issue and make the right choice, and the safe choice, for all. Thank you.

Sincerely,



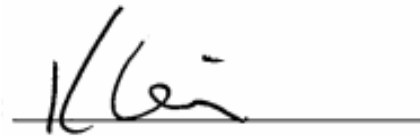
Representative Liz Beldon, RN, MSN, NPD-BC



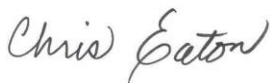
Representative Kelly Morrison, M.D.



Senator Erin Murphy, RN



Senator Matt Klein, M.D.



Senator Chris Eaton, RN

Cc: State Fair Board of Managers
Minnesota State Agricultural Society