



July 13, 2022

Dr. Barbara Ferrer
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
313 N. Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Sent via email

RE: Potential Reinstatement of LA County Indoor Mask Mandate

Dear Dr. Ferrer:

We represent a broad array of businesses and organizations of all sizes and across industries, including nonprofits and trade associations. On behalf of our members, **we thank you for your dedication to effectively addressing COVID-19. We write this letter to share our comments as the County considers issuing a public health order to reinstate an indoor mask mandate.**

We understand the ever-changing nature of COVID-19 and believe your office and the Board of Supervisors' efforts to provide free access to vaccines, testing and masks have been effective and should be continued. In addition to the health and social impacts of the pandemic, we also recognize the incredible economic hardships that COVID-19 has caused across Los Angeles' communities. As many businesses are beginning to rebound from the financial impacts that the worst days of the pandemic brought, they are increasingly concerned about the new, additional consequences of reinstating an indoor mask mandate.

Business owners and operators report that an indoor mask mandate would be nearly impossible to enforce at this time. Requiring masks puts employees in the increasingly challenging position of enforcing a mandate that many customers no longer wish to – or are unwilling to – comply with. **LA's restaurants, retail stores, museums, amusement parks, sports centers and so many other establishments are working every day to recover from the pandemic, all while facing workforce shortages, supply chain challenges and more. Businesses should not be expected to enforce a mask mandate in addition to these ongoing constraints. Businesses cannot shoulder this burden of compliance alone as they have been required to do so in the past.**

Importantly, as of July 11, 2022, no other county in the state has a mask mandate in place. Reinstating a mask mandate runs contrary to the state of California's efforts to shift from a pandemic to an endemic strategy. Last month, Governor Newsom rolled back 95 percent of all executive orders related to the pandemic. We also ask you to consider the impacts of adopting a mask mandate in Los Angeles County without coordination from the Southern California region. If Los Angeles County is the only county to adopt an indoor mask mandate, residents and visitors may choose to take their spending power to businesses in other parts of Southern California which would only harm our local economy. We must learn to operate without restrictions in a post pandemic environment where most are vaccinated and making personal decisions to wear masks.

For these reasons, we ask that you continue to consider all the potential impacts before implementing a mask mandate.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lall
President & CEO
Central City Association

Maria Salinas
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

cc: Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, First District
Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell, Second District
Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Third District
Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, Fourth District
Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Fifth District