

From: [Sarah Gray](#)
To: [Public Testimony](#)
Subject: Extending the Mask Mandate
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 9:53:08 AM

To the Transportation, Infrastructure and Operations Committee:

Hello, my name is Sarah Gray, and I am a resident of Kansas City, MO in the 64110 zip code (but not the gentrified part - the poor part). I am writing to request that you extend the mask mandate for our city.

As a young adult, I am a member of this community who passes as healthy/able-bodied despite being immunocompromised. I am writing to remind you that even the strongest looking populations are full of community members who are not in a position to survive COVID-19 physically or financially. As a Foster Care Case Manager for Jackson County, I work with populations even more vulnerable than myself. This pandemic disproportionately harms poor people and people of color. Now we are seeing the toll on children, too. These people aren't just numbers. They are my friends, neighbors, and clients. They are me.

Surviving COVID-19 for a year and a half has been exhausting, but we are not in a position to ease up on common sense protective measures. We are struggling even with a mask mandate in place. One of my foster kids had to go to Kansas just last week for emergency psychiatric care because the ERs in KCMO had no beds. Our healthcare system will buckle without extending the mandate. Mask wearing is a simple, low-cost step we can take collectively to keep everyone safer. Unfortunately, not everyone in this city will voluntarily make that choice. I need your committee to use the power you have been entrusted with by the community to protect us. We need leadership that values the lives of the most vulnerable and isn't afraid to enact ethical, evidence-based policy.

To any committee members who take the time to read this request, I am grateful for your time. I urge you to extend the mask mandate and to continue leading this city with conviction.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Sarah J. Gray, M.S. \(she/they\)](#)

Foster Care Case Manager | Cornerstones of Care

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