



September 21, 2020

The Honorable Clint Hickman and  
Members of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors  
Maricopa County Board of Supervisors  
301 West Jefferson Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Dear Chairman Hickman and Members of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors:

The Greater Phoenix Leadership Health Sector Task Force was initiated in March of this year in response to the COVID-19 health crisis. Our objective is to mitigate the impact of the COVID virus on Arizonans and ultimately save lives. We have worked closely together over the past 6 months advocating safety protocols, removing barriers to medical care, and eliminating administrative rules to help ensure hospital capacity remains available during infection spikes.

As leaders in the health ecosystem, we thank you for supporting public health with the mask mandate, the most effective safety protocol to minimize infection with the exception of a shelter in place mandate.

We understand there is a small but vocal minority calling for the elimination of the mask mandate in Maricopa. We urge you to continue maintaining the mandate. To lift the mandate would be a devastating blow to the progress we have seen in the past few months of declining COVID infection and death rates in Arizona.

Until a vaccine is widely available, masks and social distancing are the most effective tools we have to save lives, short of widespread shelter in place orders that would devastate the economy.

- Multiple scientific studies have been published demonstrating proper mask usage reduces infection <sup>(1)</sup>. There have been no scientific studies that show masks do not reduce COVID infection.
- Our own experience in Arizona reflects the effectiveness of widespread mask usage. We came dangerously close to exceeding hospital capacity in Arizona over the July 4th weekend. Since the mask mandate was implemented, hospital inpatient rates and deaths due to COVID have continued to drop. An emerging concern we should pay attention to is the rate of disease transmission (RO or R-naught), which has increased over 25% in the past three weeks from .80 to 1.06. This suggests we are opening things to quickly and/or mitigation efforts like masking are not being adhered to as diligently as required. The United States has struggled more than any other country with mask mandates, enduring almost 21% of total deaths with only about 4% of the entire world population.
- According to a Harvard CAPS/Harris poll, 79% support a mask mandate (July 2020).

Science supports mask wearing. Removing the mask mandate before a vaccine is available will cost lives. The Greater Phoenix Leadership Health Sector Task Force urges you to maintain the existing mask mandate.

Thank you in advance for the courage to do what is right in the face of opposition.

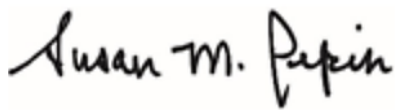
Sincerely,



Ann-Marie Alameddine  
President and CEO  
Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association



Dr. Aubrey Maze  
West Group President  
Envision Physician Service



Dr. Susan Pepin  
Managing Director, Health & Clinical Partnerships  
Senior Advisor to the EVP  
Clinical Professor  
Arizona State University



Todd LaPorte  
CEO  
Honor Health



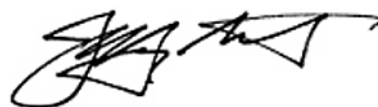
Peter Fine  
President and CEO  
Banner Health



Robert Meyer  
President and CEO  
Phoenix Children's Hospital



Pam Kehaly  
President and CEO  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona



Dr. Jeffrey Trent  
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Tammy McLeod  
President and CEO  
Flinn Foundation



David McIntyre  
President and CEO  
TriWest Healthcare Alliance



Heather Kane  
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Kim Shepard  
Market President, Arizona  
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Steve Purves  
President and CEO  
Valleywise Health



Linda Hunt  
Sr. VP Operations and CEO, Arizona  
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Suzanne Pfister  
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