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July 29, 2022

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors DRAFT

RE: Mandatory Mask Regulations

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) met on July 28 and voted to request that the Board of Supervisors decline to institute a universal indoor mask mandate but instead consider more effective and compliance-friendly alternatives. We support the call of many business leaders to respond to the current state of the pandemic in Los Angeles County with a “Mask Advisory” order entailing stepped-up public education and signage in public spaces that encourage voluntary masking.

SBCCOG supports the voluntary use of face masks, COVID-19 vaccines and testing to slow the transmission of the virus and protect vulnerable populations. Efforts to provide free access to testing, vaccines and masks have been effective and should be continued to combat the summer wave driven by the spread of Omicron subvariants including BA.5.

Unfortunately, a universal indoor mask mandate will force businesses to carry the burden of an unenforceable mandate and will only stymie economic recovery, confuse covid-weary residents and further erode public trust in governing bodies. A return to universal indoor masking is at odds with the state’s endemic roadmap. It also threatens to place local businesses at a competitive disadvantage to businesses in neighboring counties that trust their residents and patrons to make the right decision on their own, guided by two-plus years of lived pandemic experience.

We stand ready to work with you on getting the message out of importance of every individual making smart choices about protecting their health. In this way, we can be proactive without being punitive.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John Cruikshank, SBCCOG Chair
Councilmember, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

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