



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3605

May 18, 2021

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor
State of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

Dear Governor Cooper:

Last week the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued guidance stating that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear masks. This guidance affirms the efficacy of Coronavirus vaccines developed through the Trump Administration's Operation Warp Speed. It also serves as a turning point in the pandemic. We were encouraged by your recent decision to lift the mask mandate in many settings. But it did not go far enough. With all adults eligible to get a vaccine and minimal risk to children, it is time to end North Carolina's mask mandate in all settings.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services data shows that the majority of adults in North Carolina have received at least one dose of the vaccine, with 46% fully vaccinated. In addition, over 75% of people over age 65 have been vaccinated. Reinfection after receiving a vaccine is incredibly rare. The latest data from CDC found 9,245 reinfections out of 95 million vaccinated people, or about 0.009%. This shows an unvaccinated person does not pose a credible risk to a vaccinated person. Such an extremely remote risk does not justify continued restrictions on personal liberty. After 428 days, it is time for "15 days to slow the spread" to end.

On April 6, all North Carolinians over age 16 became eligible to receive the vaccine. It is now six weeks later, meaning anyone who did not qualify in a previous group and received the vaccine when eligible is now fully vaccinated. As to children not yet eligible for a vaccine, the data show that children under 18 have the lowest infection and death rate of any age group. While it is important to continue the vaccine trend, we must recognize that the era of government mandates dictating our every move in public is over.

Freedom involves personal risk assessments. Now that all high-risk persons have had the opportunity to become fully vaccinated, it is time to let North Carolinians choose for themselves whether or not to wear a mask, whether that be in schools, child care settings, or on public transportation. We ask that you follow the science by immediately ending North Carolina's mask mandate in all settings.

Sincerely,



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Madison Cawthorn
Member of Congress