

Democrats Introduce Legislation To Create New Statewide Mask Order

Written by Wisconsin Assembly Democrats
Friday, 05 February 2021 10:46 -



Bill would institute mask order for the remainder of the COVID-19 pandemic

MADISON – Yesterday, the Wisconsin State Assembly took up [Senate Joint Resolution \(SJR\) 3](#), which repeals Wisconsin's statewide mask order. Despite widespread public approval for Wisconsin's mask order and bipartisan opposition to its repeal, SJR 3 was concurred in vote, with all Democrats voting against repealing the mask order. Prior to the passage of SJR3, Assembly Democrats had proposed an amendment to Assembly Bill 1 to ensure Wisconsin would continue to have a statewide mask order no matter the outcome of SJR3. Unfortunately, the amendment was rejected on a party-line vote, with Assembly Republicans refusing to even bring it up for discussion.

In response to Republicans' elimination of one of the simplest yet most effective tools Wisconsin has to fight COVID-19, all legislative Democrats this morning introduced LRB 1809/1 to create a new statewide mask order for the remainder of the pandemic. The proposed statewide mask order would be in effect until the conclusion of the national emergency declared by the President of the United States in response to COVID-19.



Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh) said, “**A statewide mask order is a simple, effective tool that will help protect all Wisconsinites, and we know having a mask order will result in**

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more people wearing masks, which will reduce transmission, preserve hospital capacity, and ultimately help save lives. The Republicans who voted to overturn Wisconsin's mask order have sworn up and down that it 'isn't about masks,' and there was bipartisan opposition in both houses to overturning it, so I look forward to strong bipartisan support for this bill."

Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) stated, **"It is past time for Republicans to stop playing politics and stop making excuses. The Republicans who voted to eliminate Gov. Evers' mask order said repeatedly that it 'wasn't about masks,' so I hope they will join us in supporting this bill and demanding both houses vote to pass it right away."**

Rep. Jimmy Anderson (D-Fitchburg) continued, **"This is about whether or not Wisconsin's elected leaders are willing to protect the people of our state. It's not enough to simply recommend that people wear masks. The Republicans have selfishly eliminated the mask order put in place by the governor. It is our responsibility as state leaders to put an order in place through legislation, and help stop the spread of COVID-19 in Wisconsin. If we allow the forces of ignorance and selfishness to prevail. We will not only be the laughing stock of the nation, but we will also be prolonging the pain of the pandemic and put more Wisconsinites at risk."**



Rep. Sara Rodriguez (D-Brookfield) said, **"Our proposal is about science, public health and common sense. In my experience as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer with the CDC, I know how effective wearing a mask can be in preventing the spread of a virus like COVID-19, and ensuring Wisconsin has a mask order in place all across the state is critical to stopping the spread. I urge my Republican colleagues to pass this bill to protect all Wisconsinites."**

Sen. Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) said, **"There is overwhelming public support in Wisconsin for requiring masks in public places, which is exactly what a statewide mask order does. As elected officials, we must do everything in our power to stop this public health crisis, not prolong it. Wearing masks will help prevent our friends, family and neighbors from getting sick or dying."**

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LRB 1809/1 is co-authored by all Democratic members of the Wisconsin State Legislature.