

October 13, 2020

To the Office of the Governor of North Dakota:

As pediatricians serving the children of North Dakota, we have watched as COVID-19 ravages our state. North Dakota's per capita infection rate is now number one in the United States, and deaths of North Dakota citizens continue to climb. Now more than ever, North Dakota needs a mask mandate.

As the case counts increase, the percentage of our hospital beds devoted to the care of patients with COVID-19 climbs with it, which jeopardizes access to care for adult and pediatric patients as the upcoming influenza and respiratory virus season rapidly approaches.

Masking prevents the spread of COVID-19. Although universal masking is not a perfect solution, until there is an effective and safe vaccination, masking is all that stands in the way of North Dakota and a public health disaster this winter. The refusal to endorse a mask mandate is no longer an act of strong leadership; the refusal ignores sound science and the recommendations of medical experts at local, state, and national levels.

We ask you, Governor Burgum, to do what is necessary even if it is politically inexpedient. Please enact a mask mandate for the health and safety of North Dakota.

Clifford Mauriello, MD
Grant Syverson, MD
Kathy Anderson, MD
Ann Cadwalader, MD
Joan Connell, MD
Amy Oksa, MD
Alex Thompson, MD
Berit Wallevand, PA-C
Koye Oyerinde, MD, DrPH
Myra Quanrud MD
Parag Kumar, MD
Molly Linn, DO
Jonathan Rodrigues, MD
Lakshmi Panjini, MSIV
Stephanie Antony, MD
Abigail Burkett Vetter, APRN
Jagila Minso, MD
Timothy Blaufuss, DO
Tracie Newman, MD, MPH
Jonathan Pacella, MSIV
Melissa Kunkel, MD
Julie Kenien, MD
Melissa Horner, MD
Vanessa Nelson, MD

Sarah Lien, MD
Stephen Nelson, MD
Stephen Tinguely, MD
Steven Mattson, MD
Maria Weller, MD
Kristie Toman, DO
Melissa Seibel, MD
Rafael Ocejo, MD
Barbara Bentz, MD
Erica R Sauer, MD
Chris Tiongson, MD
Patrick Welle, MD
Melanie Chihak, DO
Sam Milanovich, MD
Sara Reinke, MD
Jacob Fish, MD
Dane Hammer, MD
Samuel Anim, MD
Samantha Porter APRN-CNP
Alison Hornyak, DO
Batoule Majed, MD
Matthew Trefz, MD
Parveen Wahab, MD
Jordan Coauette, MD

Aaron Van Ningen, MD
Lynae Envik, APRN, CPNP
Sadie Schmidt, MD
Christina DaSilva, DO
Jennifer Peterson, MD
Carla Zacher, MD
Brenda Thurlow, MD
Natalie Dvorak, MD
Ashley Benson, DNP
Samantha Perleberg, MD
Stephanie Hanson, MD
Jaclyn Held, DO
Justin Horner, MD
Lori Sondrol, MD
Amanda Banker, DNP, CPNP