



June 19, 2020

VIA E-MAIL

Re: Let's Mask Up to protect our community

Dear Mayor Gallego and Phoenix City Council Members,

The Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA) is the statewide hospital association improving the health of the people, patients and communities of Arizona. AzHHA thanks you for your leadership of Phoenix during these challenging times. We applaud Governor Ducey's executive order (2020-40) this week that allowed local jurisdictions to adopt policies regarding the wearing of facial masks in public for the purpose of mitigating the spread of COVID-19. As is evidenced by the Arizona Department of Health Services' COVID-19 data dashboard indicating both increased hospitalizations and patients testing positive, there is extensive community spread of COVID-19. The projected modeling of the continued spread of COVID-19 further paints a dire picture. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation ([IHME](#)) projects deaths due to COVID-19 in Arizona will more than quadruple by October 1, increasing to 4,762.

We believe the Phoenix City Council can take action today to decrease the spread and save lives. **We respectfully request you require Arizonans to wear face masks in public and provide for meaningful enforcement of non-compliance.**

We urge the City Council of Phoenix to act swiftly and decisively to require residents to wear facial masks when they are in public areas. A recent definitive study on the efficacy of face masks in China, Italy, and New York, concludes that, "...wearing of face masks in public corresponds to the **most effective means to prevent interhuman transmission**, and this inexpensive practice, in conjunction with simultaneous social distancing, quarantine, and contact tracing, represents the most likely fighting opportunity to stop the COVID-19 pandemic."¹ Additionally, the World Health Organization studied 25,000 people in 16 countries and concludes that the chance of COVID-19 infection drops from 17% to just 3% when a mask is worn.²

¹ *Identifying Airborne Transmission as the Dominant Route for the Spread of COVID-19*, The Proceeding of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS); the official journal of the National Academy of Sciences. Renyi Zhang, Yixin li, Annie L. Zhang, Yuan Wang, Mario J. Molina. [PNAS first published June 11, 2020](#)

² *Physical Distancing, Face Masks, and Eye Protection to Prevent Person to Person Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: A Systemic Review and Meta-Analysis*, The Lancet. Derek K. Chu, MD, Prof. Elie A Akl, MD, Stephanie Duda, MSc, Karla Sola, MSc, Sally Yaacoub, MPH, et. al. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31142-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31142-9)

This action will not only save lives, it will demonstrate strong support for our healthcare workers as they cope with the stress and demands of this challenging environment.

We are embarking on a new phase of our COVID-19 journey, and, we have a long way to go until the end of this outbreak. Opening up the economy is important and necessary. We believe you can save lives *and* livelihoods by supplementing business openings with mask requirements.

We stand ready to support you to help Phoenix manage health actions needed during this very challenging time. Phoenix can get through this—with clear, decisive leadership, residents who implement evidence-based practices in their daily life, and a strong healthcare community doing what they do best—taking care of patients.

We are in this together and together we will conquer COVID-19 in Arizona.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann-Marie Alameddin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "A" and "M".

Ann-Marie Alameddin
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