

State of Vermont



Senate Chamber

Montpelier, Vermont

Senate Resolution

By Senator Benning,

S.R. 21. Senate resolution suspending Senate Temporary Rule 10A and calling for a meeting of the Joint Rules Committee to suspend the Legislative Face Mask Policy.

Whereas, in March of 2020, Vermont's health care infrastructure of over 900 available hospital beds and approximately 100 ICU beds was threatened by the sudden onslaught of patients infected by a virus known as Covid-19; and,

Whereas, Governor Phil Scott thus declared Vermont to be in a state of emergency and imposed a series of protective measures based on scientific guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [hereinafter "CDC] and medical advice from his Health Commissioner, Dr. Mark Levine; and,

Whereas, Vermonters responded with a successful campaign of vaccinations, compliance with mask mandates and social distancing; and,

Whereas, the General Assembly also responded with a self-imposed mask wearing requirement in all Statehouse rooms through its Joint Rules Committee; and,

Whereas, Governor Scott has since rescinded his declared state of emergency, thus removing any legal foundation for the General Assembly's self-imposed mask mandate within its Statehouse ; and,

Whereas, the CDC has declared Covid infection rates in Washington County, home of the General Assembly and Statehouse, to have dropped significantly enough to remove mask requirements unless otherwise advised by one's personal care provider, thus removing any CDC support for self-imposed mask mandates within the Statehouse; and,

Whereas, as of March 17, only 17 hospital beds and 5 ICU beds are occupied by Covid-19 patients in a State with a population of approximately 640,000, thus demonstrating Vermont's health care infrastructure is no longer threatened to the point of supporting self-imposed mask mandates within the Statehouse; and,

Whereas, this Senate has control over the Senate chamber and all Senate committee rooms; *now therefore be it resolved*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the self-imposed mask mandate dictated by Senate Temporary Rule 10A be suspended immediately within the Senate chamber and all Senate committee rooms; and,

Resolved: That the Senate representatives to the Joint Rules Committee be directed to call for a meeting of said committee forthwith and vote to suspend immediately the Legislative Face Mask Policy adopted by the Joint Rules Committee for the Capitol Complex.