



Ohio House Democratic Caucus

November 24, 2020

Governor Mike DeWine
Vern Riffe Center
77 S High St, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine,

I write to you today to urge you to veto Senate Bill 311. If enacted this legislation would take away the ability of the State of Ohio to act nimbly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will limit the ability of our public health officials to respond to not only this outbreak, but future outbreaks or bioterrorism events.

The number of rapidly escalating coronavirus cases, hospitalizations, ICU admissions and ER visits across Ohio and the nation requires quick and decisive action in stopping the spread of this deadly disease. Stripping the State Health Director from the ability to take action during a public health crisis puts all Ohioans in danger. It will only lead to more deaths and will further destabilize our economy. As the Minority Leader of the Ohio House of Representatives, I want to get through this crisis and reopen our economy, but that can only happen if the health and safety of our citizens are part of those decisions. That means listening to health experts, implementing strategies to control the virus, protecting workers and restoring consumer confidence. This bill will slow our response, cost more lives and force more businesses into financial ruin.

In short, Senate Bill 311 is dangerous legislation. We will never be able to get a handle on this pandemic if we keep politicizing masks and urging noncompliance with the Ohio Department of Health's orders. Medical experts throughout this state oppose this bill, and those are the voices Ohio's executive offices and lawmakers should be listening to on this issue.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this most important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emilia Sykes". The signature is stylized and includes a large, circular flourish at the end.

Rep. Emilia Sykes, Minority Leader
House District 34