August 11, 2021

The Honorable Bill Lee
Tennessee State Capitol, 1st Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Dear Governor Lee:

The General Assembly of the State of Tennessee has a constitutional duty to enact general law to shape the options, decisions, and priorities of our local governments, including local boards and other local entities.

We write today to request that you call an extraordinary session of the General Assembly in order for the legislature to convene and address misdirected and mandated responses to COVID-19 by local entities and officials. It is of the utmost urgency to move quickly due to the potential of significant harm to Tennesseans.

We believe there is a need to curtail the overreach by independent health boards and officials, confirm a parent's right to make decisions that impact the mental and physical health of their children, provide support and direction to schools to ensure educators are properly compensated for COVID-19 leave, and protect all Tennesseans from misdirected mandates designed to limit their ability to make their own decisions.

The six independent health boards, along with unelected officials, have made and will continue to make decisions that stifle access to educational opportunities for our children and infringe on their freedoms and liberty. Some of these mandates have been accompanied by threats of reckless endangerment, school closure, and segregating students based on vaccination status.

We believe there is much debate and action needed around the appropriate balance of parents' right to make healthcare decisions for their children and the government's ability to mandate healthcare decisions upon them.

Finally, in addition to the debate needed around continued COVID-19 mandates, the General Assembly needs to evaluate the ongoing discrimination of Tennesseans by prohibiting their access to buildings due only to their vaccination status.

Therefore, we request that you, by virtue of the power and authority vested in your office pursuant to Article III, Section 9 of the Tennessee Constitution, call the One Hundred and Twelfth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee to convene in extraordinary session for the purposes stated above as well as addressing other issues related to COVID-19. We look forward to working with you to pass meaningful legislation so that Tennessee children, families, and businesses can continue to thrive.
Speaker Cameron Sexton
Deputy Speaker Curtis Johnson
Chairman Jeremy Faison
Majority Whip Johnny Garrett
Floor Leader Paul Sherrell
Freshman Leader Scotty Campbell
Speaker Pro Tempore Pat Marsh
Leader William Lamberth
Assistant Majority Leader Ron Gant
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Representative Dennis Powers

Representative Gary Hicks

Representative Iris Rudder

Representative Jay Reedy

Representative Jerry Sexton

Representative John Holsclaw

Representative John Gillespie
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Representative Kevin Vaughan

Representative Lowell Russell

Representative Bruce Griffey

Representative Mary Littleton

Representative Joan Carter

Representative Bud Hulsey

Representative Kent Calfee

Representative Kirk Haston

Representative Mark White

Representative Mark Hall

Representative Bryan Terry

Representative Mike Sparks

Representative Sam Whitson
Representative Rebecca Alexander

Representative Robin Smith

Representative Charlie Baum

Representative Rusty Grills

Representative Sabi Kumar

Representative Patsy Hazlewood

Representative Rick Eldridge

Representative Ron Travis

Representative Rush Bricken

Representative Ryan Williams

Representative Scott Cepicky

Representative Susan Lynn