

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee:

I am writing to you today to urge you to support SB311. I am an Ohio voter, a manager with a large corporation, and a father of three. The twice-weekly lectures we continue to receive from the current administration are not only abhorrent, but they are nothing short of gaslighting. The emotional toll this continued implementation of school closures, business closures, mask mandates, and now "curfews" is taking on Ohioans will have consequences for years to come.

When the governor closed schools in March, our two school-aged children suffered. Our oldest (12) needs the structure and routine of school, the companionship and collegiality with his classmates and friends. After the first week, there were nightly tears. Our then-kindergartner, who was progressing with reading quite well, stopped his progress, despite my wife working with him regularly. Now, in 1st grade, he is sent to a reading specialist three times a week to try to catch him back up. While, thankfully, our kids are in school 5 days a week, the mask mandates and draconian social distancing orders that came from the governor have had an emotional impact on our kids. Add in the totally unnecessary quarantine procedures for kids and teachers who are deemed to have been "exposed", and it's a wonder school is even in session at all! (And quite honestly, it feels like the governor would prefer they be closed anyway. He may say he's leaving it up to the schools, but we all know there has been pressure placed on local health departments and school districts).

The US Constitution matters. The Ohio Constitution matters. And neither can be suspended just because the governor deems there is a "health emergency". WHERE is the emergency, anyway? We're now being told we have to stay home between 10 and 5? Are we teenagers and the governor is our father? This virus, according to the CDC, has a recovery rate of at least 99.8%. So again, I ask, WHERE is the emergency?

The governor continues to subvert the COEQUAL powers of the three branches of government by issuing orders and mandates. It is time for the legislature to balance those powers once again. I respectfully ask that you fully support SB311 and balance the power. Thank you for your time and attention to this very serious issue.

Sincerely,
Scott Burr