



**J. Kevin Stitt**  
Office of the Governor  
State of Oklahoma

Chairman James E. Clyburn  
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6143

August 12, 2020

Dear Chairman Clyburn,

I am writing in response to your inquiry regarding the White House Coronavirus Task Force's weekly report that was sent to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Your letter inquired about its recommendations issued on July 29, 2020, specifically how they pertain to Oklahoma. Since August 1<sup>st</sup>, Oklahoma's average daily confirmed cases have declined by 37% and hospitalizations have remained flat or declining, with a 22% decline in the past 14 days. This has transpired without a statewide mask mandate, but with more local authorities taking action appropriate to their local situations.

Out of my support for local control, the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) issued on July 9 a unique COVID-19 Risk Alert Map to help drive decisions unique to each county based on population density, local tracing data and healthcare infrastructure. OSDH's COVID-19 Risk Alert Map leveraged the foundational elements of the White House Coronavirus Task Force's map that was first issued to the States in late June. The announcement can [be read here](#) and the weekly maps and color-coded recommendations to counties are [available here](#).

While revisions are underway to modify recommendations based on recent data, at the time of issuing this Alert Map, OSDH recommended face coverings in all public settings for orange counties. Following the issuing of this guidance, several Oklahoma cities in orange counties voted to enact face covering requirements and/or further guidance in accordance with regional tracing data, including Oklahoma City and the City of Tulsa which represent Oklahoma's two most densely populated areas.

Furthermore, since Oklahoma's Phase 3 reopening on June 1, our state has seen an increase of testing by 130% and grown our contact tracing staff by 160%. Thanks to advancements in medicine and understanding of the virus, we have also seen the cumulative mortality rate decline to 1.4% today.

Chairman Clyburn, I believe as Americans we can all agree that every life is valuable. We do not want COVID-19 to take another life. We also do not want another family to lose their household income and the roof over

their heads. We do not want isolation, and the undue mental health challenges it brings, to rob the quality of life of another loved one.

In April 2019, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services received 767 reports of child abuse. In April 2020, that number dropped staggeringly to just 57. We know the drop-in reporting is largely due to children being away from their teachers and isolated at home in unsafe situations. We do not want abuse to go unnoticed and unaccounted for another day. We want our children learning and engaged again in society. This is just one of the many untold stories of the impact of COVID-19 beyond health and the economy. We are looking at all facets.

This is a complex time as the world's understanding of the novel virus evolves and advances. It is why my Governor's Solution Task Force continues to meet several days a week to discuss the latest data and to review various recommendations and decisions impacting all 4 million Oklahomans.

My office will respond more in full to your various questions and requests for documentation in the coming days. Our central priority is preparing for the upcoming visit of Dr. Deborah Birx to Oklahoma as one of her many stops across the U.S. as a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the initials 'K Stitt' written in a cursive, stylized font.

J. Kevin Stitt  
Governor of Oklahoma