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Mississippi State Medical Association Calls for Statewide Mask Mandate
COVID-19 Cases Surge Limiting Healthcare System Ability to Provide Adequate Care

JACKSON, Miss. – With the reopening of communities throughout the state, the daily number of COVID-19 cases has been increasing at an alarming rate, crippling the ability of our major hospital systems to provide emergency care for patients. Throughout the pandemic, physicians have been working on the front lines to care for patients diagnosed with COVID-19 while continuing to provide critical care for all patients in need. In order to protect the health of physicians and other healthcare workers, and preserve critical medical supplies needed to care for Mississippians, the Mississippi State Medical Association (MSMA) is supporting physician's call for a statewide mask mandate requiring everyone to wear masks in public spaces.

Early evidence has shown that masks and face coverings significantly reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Mississippians demonstrated their willingness to support comprehensive efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 by practicing social distancing, frequently washing their hands, and staying home whenever possible. As COVID-19 cases in Mississippi and across the South continue to rise, additional measures must be implemented to ensure critical medical resources are available to meet the needs of all Mississippians, including a statewide mask mandate that helps reduce community spread of the COVID-19.

We strongly believe that without a statewide mask mandate our state's healthcare system cannot sustain the trajectory of this outbreak, which could ultimately result in the loss of the lives of many Mississippians. With the staggering toll of this pandemic on our state, we need to act quickly and decisively. We can defeat COVID-19 in the same way we have historically defeated public health threats in the past—by letting evidence and science dictate our decisions and inform our actions. Science and evidence have made it absolutely clear that COVID-19 is not behind us, and we must resist the urge to relax the measures that have proven effective in keeping people safe.

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About the Mississippi State Medical Association

The Mississippi State Medical Association is the largest physician advocacy organization in Mississippi, representing nearly 5,000 physicians and medical students. Since 1856, MSMA has been a trusted health policy leader and professional development resource for physicians, representing the unified voice of physicians statewide on state and federal health care issues while providing information needed to navigate health care legislation and regulatory changes.