



May 18, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Chairman, National Governors Association
444 N. Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

The Honorable Greg Fischer
President, U.S. Conference of Mayors
1620 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Governor Cuomo and Mayor Fischer:

The recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance that fully vaccinated Americans may resume certain activities without wearing a mask is encouraging news in the fight against COVID-19 and indicates that we are a step closer to the end of the pandemic. State and local orders are substantially complicating the situation.

For more than a year, the retail industry has worked exceptionally hard to safely provide American families with the goods and services they need and want. Through proactive initiatives, the industry has kept supply lines running and the economy open while keeping customers and their associates safe. Retailers have been among the most vocal proponents of mask-wearing, maintaining employee and customer face-covering policies consistent with and often exceeding those required by state and local orders. Knowing the risk of confrontations with those who refuse to wear masks, retailers have delivered de-escalation training to teach employees how to manage conflicts with customers and between customers, while also hiring third-party security guards to interact with customers who refuse to wear face coverings.

Retail employees should not be asked to serve as de facto law enforcement related to masks for vaccinated versus non-vaccinated customers. As state and local officials consider the evolving federal guidance on masks, we urge thoughtful consideration related to the practicality of state and local orders. Our recommendation is to permit state and local orders to track CDC guidance closely, allowing retailers to make national policy decisions that reflect the most current scientific advice. If localities choose to keep mask requirements in place for unvaccinated Americans, administration of these requirements must not be placed on retail employees.

The Retail Industry Leaders Association and the National Retail Federation appreciate your consideration of this request. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact both Michael Hanson at RILA or David French at NRF.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BDodge'.

Brian Dodge
President
Retail Industry Leaders Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MShay'.

Matthew Shay
President & CEO
National Retail Federation

cc: Bill McBride, National Governors Association
Tom Cochran, U.S. Conference of Mayors
State Retail Associations