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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Demands Biden Administration Rescind Unlawful Head Start Mask Mandate

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is leading 22 other state attorneys general in demanding the end of the Head Start program's mask mandate. In November 2021, President Joe Biden and his administration announced the forced masking of children and toddlers as young as two years old—even outdoors—in participating schools and daycares. Last December, Attorney General Moody filed a lawsuit to end Biden's vaccine and mask mandate for the Head Start program and won. The decision stands and has yet to be appealed by the Biden administration.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "We challenged these unlawful, federal mandates in court and won. Now, the Biden administration is ignoring the law and continuing to force children as young as two years old to wear masks while playing outside. As a mother, I believe this will have lasting developmental effects. It is far past time for the president to abandon this unlawful policy."

In a letter to President Biden, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra, Administration for Children and Families Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary JooYeun Chang and Office of Head Start Director Bernadine Futrell, Attorney General Moody and 22 other attorneys general argue that the Head Start mask mandate is unnecessary. The letter states: "Your mask mandate was wrong from the beginning. The World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund agree: 'Children aged 5 years and under should not be required to wear masks. This is based on the safety and overall interest of the child'…mask use should be limited because of the 'potential impact of wearing a mask on learning and psychosocial development.'"

The letter also points out that even the states with some of the most restrictive COVID-19 policies are now lifting indoor mask mandates at schools. If the mandate remains in place, the staff, children and toddlers at Head Start programs will soon be among the only people in the country forced to wear masks.

In addition to Attorney General Moody, the attorneys general of the following states signed on to the letter: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia and West Virginia.

To read a full copy of the letter, click here.

In December 2021, Attorney General Moody challenged President Biden's unlawful mandates for Head Start staff, teachers and students in court. Attorney General Moody and 23 other

attorneys general filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana. On Dec. 31, 2021, the judge granted a preliminary injunction.

To learn more, click here.