

Ladies and Gentlemen of the House thank you for your time and thank you all for being here tonight.

694 days...

694 days the state of RI has been under a “state of emergency”

694 days our Governors have operated with unchecked power and control over how the people of our state conduct their daily lives, how they do or do not socially interact with colleagues, friends, family, and neighbors. How we can or cannot attend our religious institutions. How we are allowed to conduct or shut down our businesses, and whether we can keep our livelihoods to feed our family.

694 days our children have or have not been allowed to pursue an education, play with friends without fear of infecting them or being infected, or seeing each other’s faces in a classroom setting.

694 days hospitals have had to postpone important elective surgeries, turn away loved ones of the sick and dying to be alone in their final and most vulnerable moments of life.

694 days we have been living under a state of emergency granting one-person unchecked power and control of this all for the first time in our nation’s history.

Our forefathers created this constitutional republic, because they knew strength and wisdom of a nation comes with collaboration, debate, checks and balances. Learning from each other, and from our history. They fought war to defend this. Because we the people have the god given right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

694 days of living under totalitarian rule, has plagued our state.

We have one of the highest infection rates in the nation today, with some of the strictest masking protocols, and highest % of vaccinated residents...What more do you need to see, the governor’s plans are not working.

How is it, that in this state of emergency so severe, that it’s the longest term in our nation’s history, but our Governor has felt we could afford to lay off thousands of healthcare workers while stating hospitals were burdened and short staffed? So short staffed, we are one of only a few states that has needed to look to the National Guard to assist with healthcare.

What data did the Governor see that proved unvaccinated healthcare workers were infecting patients, but vaccinated weren’t, when data clearly proves vaccinated and unvaccinated can get and spread COVID?

Why would he require thousands of healthcare workers be terminated, knowing the number of beds available in a hospital, is determined by the number of staff available to treat each bed amidst a “State of Emergency” during a deadly pandemic?

How is it, that our Governor has felt we could replace those thousands of healthy healthcare workers, with vaccinated COVID infected healthcare workers when there is confirmed data that vaccinated people can still spread the virus?

How is it that the Governor has continued to require our children wear masks while in school, sports, and extracurricular activities after it was proven in our superior court twice, after review of data driven evidence and expert testimony, that masking our children is causing irreparable harm to them?

Why would you knowingly cause irreparable harm to our children, when his administration testified in court that there had been NO pediatric deaths in RI caused by COVID? None.

How is it that our Governor has made the decision to mask our children, knowing there has been no data to suggest or prove that masking helps prevent COVID as proven out in the RI superior court?

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, the state of our state is a direct result of bad decisions made to which one person is solely responsible. COVID will continue to change and evolve. Variants will always be out there. This is endemic. We need to look at the results living under a constant state of emergency has created and realize, these decisions cannot rest solely on the shoulders of a Governor. Our state has failed its people, and it's time to right this ship. We need to approve H7217 & H7218 and oppose H7256.

Thank you

Ariana Ramos

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