

DEPUTATION IN WRITING

REGIONAL COUNCIL

JULY 9, 2020

Subject: Masks in public places

Spokesperson: Judy McIntyre-Smith

Name of Group or person(s) being represented (if applicable):

Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:

I understand that York Region is having a meeting this Thursday, July 9, 2020, to discuss the issue of making masks mandatory in public places. I wanted to chime in before the vote to express my opinion on the subject. I am a senior with a husband who has compromised health due to diabetes. I go out to grocery shop every two weeks with mask and gloves and that's about the extent of my outings other than going for drives or having a friend or two over on the deck which lends itself easily to social distancing. I have visited a variety of grocery stores as well as hardware stores. I find that roughly 40% of the shoppers I've experienced, wear masks. Each store varies in its preventative protocol. The big box stores have the advantage of wider aisles so social distancing is easier than smaller stores. However, not all staff wear masks and I've witnessed the same staff talking to each other up close with no regard for social distancing. Smaller stores with narrow aisles have arrows directing traffic but inevitably, lots of shoppers disregard the arrows and you're stuck bumping head on or backing up. You also have to wait behind shoppers in narrow aisles, who are taking a long time to decide what they want off a shelf. When nicely pointing out the arrows to shoppers, some have been very rude and complain about having to follow too many rules. The whole shopping experience becomes stressful to say the least. However, it's a totally different vibe when you shop at a store where masks are mandatory. Bravo to those stores! We all know that wearing a mask prevents others from our droplets so if everyone wears a mask, we're all protected from each other. It levels the playing field. It shows respect for all people. We can slide quickly past people in aisles and not worry about getting infected. I can talk to the checkout clerk and not worry about infecting him/her or vice versa. I really don't think that the plexiglass panels installed in most stores, keep all droplets out. What about the air above? We are also breathing in recirculated air inside. Proper fitting masks are the best protection. I still believe that limiting numbers of shoppers and all social distancing protocols are necessary at all checkouts and throughout stores where possible; but, mandatory mask wearing takes our safety to a whole new level. I also think that masks need to be worn outside in congested areas where social distancing is impossible. We all need to be socially responsible to fight this pandemic. Making masks mandatory forces everyone to be just that! Thank you in advance for considering my opinions.

Sincerely,

Judy McIntyre-Smith

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