Opinion

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PILOT EDITORIAL

Governor has gone too far

There are so many problems associated with Gov. Tim Walz's statewide facemask mandate, it's hard to know where to start.

The mandate is not only inconsistent and baseless, but also a gross abuse of the governor's power.

It's ironic the most vocal supporters of this facemask mandate — including the governor himself — are the most vocal supporters of legalized abortion. Wearing a facemask protects others, they say, adding the sacrifice is selfless, and legally mandating it the right thing to do. Yet these are the same people who are the first to defend the ability of those unwilling to sacrifice for the life of their unborn children to legally end the life of that human being. "My body, my choice," they chant in the streets, their selfishness a death sentence to the most innocent among us.

The governor and other facemask proponents tout the science behind the effectiveness of facemasks in preventing the spread of COVID-19, but neglect to mention results of other studies finding little to no effectiveness. So, let's bring to it down to its most elemental level: If facemasks work, prove it. Have the Legislature enact a law mandating their use. Then allow the state to open back up completely — schools, bars and restaurants, concert venues, sports stadiums. If facemasks work, we should be good to go. If they don't, admit it and give us back our freedom.

Walz issued his statewide facemask mandate last Wednesday, hours after the Minnesota Legislature adjourned a special session. Rather than make his case to state lawmakers on the veracity of a statewide facemask mandate, the governor chose to wait until they were out of town to issue his edict — which violates existing state statute — and couch it in the four-month-old emergency declaration he seems to believe grants him dictator-like powers. The governor is responsible for implementing laws put in place by duly elected legislators, not creating new laws on a whim and cramming them down the throats of the people.

Inconsistent in nature, baseless in science and an egregious example of an abuse of power, Walz's statewide facemask mandate needs to go.

It's becoming increasingly apparent that so does he.

China, like the USSR, is an evil empire

For a long time, politicians on both sides of the aisle, from Bill Clinton to George Bush, have told us the rise of China — and its political system — is something America must tolerate, in the name of greater prosperity through economic interdependence.

We now see how wrong — and morally bankrupt — they were. China's entry in the World Trade Organization accelerated the destruction of America's manufacturing jobs. It turns out state-run companies operating with some forced labor and an endless slush fund of government money can outcompete ordinary businesses.

Our professional class, meanwhile, saw the chance to profit from the new order. Why fight the Communist Party when you can make money off it? McKinsey, a management consulting firm, defended the Chinese regime publicly and often, waving away its human rights abuses and violation of trade laws.

For ethnic minorities and persecuted groups in China, free trade has become a sentence to forced labor camps and cultural genocide.

China, like the Soviet and Nazi regimes, uses forced labor, internal deportations and ethnic cleansing as a way to maintain control over its citizens.

In northwestern China, the Uighurs, an ethnic group with its own unique culture and history, are being surveilled constantly and interned in reeducation camps. They are facing genocide as we buy Chinese goods from factories run on their slave labor.

Like every genocidal regime, China targets the family first. Married couples are surveilled constantly and forcibly separated if they are interned in camps. Women are being forcibly sterilized and some pregnant women are forced to have abortions.

If they're lucky enough to have their baby, the family's suffering only gets worse — the Communist Party dictates what names they can and cannot give to their babies. If they give their children a religious-sounding name, the government will force them to change it.

After that, the family may be forbidden from transmitting their cultural and religious traditions to their children. Being predominantly Muslim, this means children are not allowed to go to mosque — China is officially an atheist state — or a religious school.

The child may then be sent to a boarding school, unable to see his or her parents for months and perhaps years at a time. The child's parents may be sent to two separate factories, thousands of miles apart. The family has been all but destroyed.

The man and woman, now away from each other, away from their community and separated from their children, work to make the toys you buy your children, knowing they may never get to see theirs again.

Their children for our plastic. When you vote for politicians who support free trade with China, this is what you are supporting.

JUST JOSHIN'
Joshua Schuetz

READERS WRITE

Choose ambition, convictions over opportunist looking to slide in

To the editor:

I have concerns about the Republican-endorsed candidate for Minnesota House District 23A.

Voters need to scrutinize the candidates. Look at their websites and campaign postings. Bjorn Olson has done little to reach out. Is he capable of working hard and understanding constituents' concerns? His website is generic, revealing nothing pertinent. Visit Elmore, talk with citizens for an accurate description of his involvement. While campaigning for mayor of Elmore, he claimed authority to direct the National Guard to tear down abandoned houses. It sounded impressive. Unfortunately, it never happened. Someone lacking the ambition to work hard at home isn't likely to work hard for us either. His claim of taking Elmore from $120,000 deficit to $23,000 surplus in one year is misleading. YSI Academy closed unexpectedly that year causing a $120,000 tax loss. A new well was needed. Voting "no" each year to increasing taxes isn't a solution and isn't good leadership. It was a means to pad his political resume.

Mike Sukalski has been traveling across the district meeting with farmers, business owners and the general public every week. He's an active member with leadership roles in 12 local organizations. He cares about the people in this district and makes a dedicated effort to see and hear us. His stand is clear, concise and publicly posted. He takes a firm stand on issues, is approachable and willing to listen.

Ask yourself if you want someone with ambition and convictions to work for you as our representative or someone trying to slide in on Rep. Bob Gunther's coattails.

Lorrie Bosma
Blue Earth

Fair board made the right decision

To the editor:

Thank you to the Jackson County Fair board for making the wise decision to not go ahead with the fair in the format that was being planned. Although it is disappointing, it was the best decision. I am proud of the dedicated members of our great fair board for putting aside their own personal opinions and all the hard work they had done to put the safety of the people first.

The Jackson County Fair has always been one of the highlights of the summer for me. Since the mid-1990s, I have volunteered to help at the fair village, helping with the cleaning and then monitoring the buildings during fair week. I have enjoyed the exhibits, the food, the people, the excitement in the air and all the events that make our fair so outstanding. I shall miss all of this, but look forward to the excitement of the 2021 fair.

With fairs, threshing shows, town celebrations, etc., being canceled, this has certainly been a summer of a "new norm" as we all unite to protect not only ourselves, but also our family, our friends and our neighbors. Whether you agree or disagree with our governor and his staff, remember they are trying their best to keep us safe from a virus that is daily changing.

Our nation has been built by shared sacrifice. It has been made the great nation it is by ordinary people doing the extraordinary. During this pandemic let's follow the example of our ancestors and the sacrifices they made to protect each other and our nation during past times of crisis. Sometimes there are difficulties in our life, not because we are doing something wrong but because we are doing something right.

Mary Chonko
Jackson

Use of power — or abuse of power?

To the editor:

Gov. Tim Walz now makes us wear masks. With his executive power and no legislative oversight, how long is this to be done? What will be the trigger to stop, and how long will the governor have the power?

With the rules he has initiated, the Jackson area now has a great racetrack not being used and had a great list of events for the region to enjoy that has been canceled. I know many in the area were looking forward to the county fair. The rules he has in place made local people have to make a hard decision to change what is being done. Employees of the state are being paid to check for compliance on many other "new rules."

People in Minnesota rioted in our two largest cities and the Democratic mayors of the cities could or would not deal with it. Walz had the National Guard ready, but did not seem to know what to do. Damage estimates are at around $500 million. The governor decided the damage should be paid for by the federal government. Thankfully, the people in power there decided it was not their issue and declined the request.

I am hearing people wondering what they should do. I am doing this — and probably more. You can vote in November and help make a difference in removing people who support the power our governor is using in the state and those who support this nationally. You also need to support those who do not agree with this use of power by letting them know now.

Richard Koch
Jackson

Your voice can matter; use it

To the editor:

I have been pleased to see the large number and variety of letters to the editor that have appeared in the Jackson County Pilot recently. Like the late L.J. Willet used to say when people asked him why he wrote so many letters to the editor, "Why do you write so few?" Everyone's opinion is important, even if writing isn't something he or she enjoys. I'll never forget what my late father said years ago about that. At the time, the decision was being made about how to route Interstate 90 around Jackson. One plan called for it to go through Jackson. Some people liked that plan, and I'm sure potential land sales had something to do with it. My father said a quiet person who rarely spoke up wrote a strong letter to the editor against that plan and apparently turned the tide.

Your voice can matter. Use it.

Sam Smith
Jackson

LAST WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of President Donald Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Source: Jackson County Pilot Website

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of Gov. Tim Walz's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Vote online at jacksoncountypilot.com.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Jackson County Pilot welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must include the writer's name, as well as address and phone number for verification purposes. Letters should be brief, up to 300 words. The editor reserves the right to determine whether material submitted for publication shall be printed and the right to edit as needed. Submit letters in person at the Jackson County Pilot office, mail them to 310 Second St. in Jackson or email them to editor@livewireprinting.com The deadline for letters is Monday noon. All submissions become the property of the Jackson County Pilot and may be published or otherwise used in any medium.

James Eigenberg
james.eigenberg@co.jackson.mn.us

Phil Nasby
phil.nasby@co.jackson.mn.us

Cathy Hohenstein
cathy.hohenstein@co.jackson.mn.us

Scott McClure
scott.mcclure@co.jackson.mn.us

Don Wachal
don.wachal@co.jackson.mn.us

CONTACT YOUR COMMISSIONERS.

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—PILOT STAFF—

Justin R. Lessman	justinl@livewireprinting.com	Publisher
Dan Condon	danc@livewireprinting.com	Sports Editor
Mike Jordan	mikej@livewireprinting.com	Staff Writer
Joshua Schuetz	joshuas@livewireprinting.com	Staff Writer

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
Jackson County Pilot
P.O. Box 208
Jackson, MN 56143
Phone (507) 847-3771

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