



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Commissioner's Statement Regarding Reconvening of the MUS Healthy Fall 2020 Task Force:**

In light of the changing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing number of cases both nationally and within the state – coupled with evidence around the efficacy of face masks in slowing the spread of the virus as well as the demographic trends among positive cases – I am asking the MUS Healthy Fall 2020 Task Force to reconvene to discuss a possible mask requirement. The Task Force also will consider issues related to compliance, enforcement and other details surrounding a mask requirement. The Task Force also will consider any relevant exceptions to a requirement.

This follows a rich and thoughtful discussion of the issue among our Board of Regents during their Tuesday meeting, as well as input we have received from students, faculty, staff and community members. We appreciate the patience of our campus communities and the general public as my office and the Board of Regents work deliberately and methodically, in concert with state and local health officials, to evaluate our response to the pandemic. Taking steps to reduce the risk of virus transmission among our students and employees continues to be the first priority of the Montana University System and the Commissioner's Office.

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