

State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Honorable Governor Jay Inslee

RE: Kettle Falls School District Labor and Industries Complaint

Governor, it has come to our attention that the Kettle Falls School District has received a non-compliance complaint originating from your office, resulting in the closure of all schools in the district. Since March of 2020, our schools, businesses, hospitals, families, and children have obeyed your state of emergency mandates. We have watched our friends go without life-saving surgeries, watched businesses be boarded up, and children suffer in silence. As you are aware, our students are in a state of crisis and Northeast Washington has lost an alarming number of children to suicide recently.

After your edict announcing the end of the Washington state outdoor mask mandate, and the near end to the nationwide mask mandate, the elected board of the Kettle Falls School District responded to the outcry from parents and the obvious health and emotional safety of the students. The board passed a resolution to end the practice of forcing our young children into masks. This and many other mandates have been followed for over 700 days. Our children stayed home, our children masked up, our children cried out, our children fell behind, and some of our children gave up.

Following the district resolution, compliance was requested from the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) to continue to have staff wear masks until the date you have set forth, which was followed through by the district and accepted by L&I. Unfortunately, days later, the district received ANOTHER complaint, stating it originated from the Governors office, to remask the children or lose funding. We find this shocking after the original acceptance of compliance by L&I, the physical, emotional, and academic crisis of our children.

The Kettle Falls School District is not elite, nor wealthy. The children have not escaped the fear, the mandates, the emotional toil, nor the unprecedented mental and social strain. Please end your L&I complaint and support your agency's initial ruling. It's time we move forward for the children.

Sincerely,

Rep. JACQUELIN MAYCUMBER  
Minority Floor Leader

Rep. JOEL KRETZ  
Minority Deputy Leader

Sen. SHELLY SHORT  
Minority Floor Leader