



OPINION

After two years of destruction, it's up to Congress to end COVID-19 tyranny

by [Rep. Chip Roy](#) | February 17, 2022 03:11 PM

On Monday, the United States marked its 700th day into “15 days to slow the spread.” The day is an important milestone, though not a good one, and it should make us reflect on the past two years of bureaucratic edicts, failed health policies, a broken economy, and an unrecognizable spirit of tyranny in our nation.

Now, as Congress weighs the prospect of continuing down this destructive path, it should spur all freedom-loving people to action.

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Every policy decision has its costs. In April 2020, I [warned](#) that the lockdowns were going to cost lives through increased suicides, deaths of despair, homicides, and substance abuse.

Indeed, the lockdowns were both an ineffective and destructive policy decision. A [study](#) conducted by Johns Hopkins University found that lockdowns *only reduced COVID-19 deaths by 0.2%*. Let that sink in.

What were the effects of the lockdowns?

They pushed people further into substance abuse and addiction. In 2020, there were 1,006 drug-related and alcohol-induced deaths for teenagers ages 13 to 18. This staggering figure is nearly double the 541 drug-related and alcohol-induced deaths from 2019, and it's far more than the [595 teenagers who have died of COVID-19](#) since the onset of the pandemic two years ago. Meanwhile, over the course of one year, our nation saw 100,306 [overdose deaths](#) — the highest recorded in American history. The lockdowns were a disaster for mental health. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), teenagers (ages 12-17) suicide attempts were

same time in 2019. America saw more broken families, with increased [divorces](#), [increased](#) incidences of child abuse, higher [use of pornography](#), and higher rates of [gambling addictions](#).

The lockdowns hamstrung children's education, especially for the least advantaged. The rise in failing grades appears to be [most pronounced](#) among students from low-income households, multilingual students, and students learning virtually. In 2020, students [on average](#) started school about three months behind, and the lag was felt by minority students more.

However, something has recently changed — and it is not “the science,” as Leana Wen [claimed](#). New York, California, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, Washington, and Oregon have relaxed or announced that they will relax certain mandates. In fact, after only one month of implementation, our nation's capital just reversed its Orwellian private-business vaccine mandate. Why do this? Could it be that [poll](#) after [poll](#) after [poll](#) showed that people are rightly fed up with the restrictions on their lives and the abject incompetence from our public health "experts?"

But, while the tide is turning, the fight against COVID-19 tyranny is far from over, and it now centers on the Senate. The last two years have shown the Left is hellbent on controlling the people, and it will only back off if forced by public pressure. Its failed policies have stolen valuable memories and experiences from our children. Its policies destroyed lives, broke families, and shuttered small businesses while empowering corporations. And still it seeks to take away thousands of people's livelihoods.

Today, healthcare workers, service members, and others have lost their livelihood or face termination for their personal decisions not to get a COVID-19 vaccine — that does not [prevent transmission](#) — because of President Joe Biden's unlawful mandates. Some schools and colleges are still operating remotely. Many still have mask requirements for young children, which have been shown to be ineffective and harmful. Much of our government's federal workforce is still working remotely, causing delays in receiving government services such as tax refunds, veterans service records, and even [passports](#). Grocery shelves are bare, and even when stocked, prices are up.

Even after losing in the Supreme Court, the [president](#) encouraged private corporations to be the arms of the state and require a vaccine at a time when the economy is struggling.

This week, Senate Republicans have a choice to make. Our Constitution gives members of Congress the power to defund these mandates. It is high time they use it. They can choose to stand up to this administration and refuse to fund these mandates, or they can capitulate to the Left and ignore the people of this country who have had enough.

Chip Roy, a Republican, represents Texas's 21st Congressional District.

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