



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Andy Beshear  
GOVERNOR

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**VETO MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
REGARDING SENATE BILL 1 OF THE  
2021 EXTRAORDINARY SESSION**

**Sections 1 and 2.**

*I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following parts:*

Page 1, lines 4 through 27, in their entirety.

Page 2, lines 1 through 15, in their entirety.

*I am vetoing these parts because these sections nullify regulations promulgated by the Kentucky Board of Education and Cabinet for Health and Family Services that require facial coverings in public schools and childcare settings. Facial coverings are a safe and effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19 so that children may continue to attend in-person school and childcare. Facial coverings are particularly important because many children between the ages of 12 and 17 are not vaccinated, and vaccines remain unavailable for children age 11 and under. In recent weeks, children and school employees have been hospitalized and, tragically, died from COVID-19. School districts that delayed imposing facial coverings requirements saw large numbers of students and staff test positive or quarantined. Because facial coverings reduce the spread of this disease, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Kentucky Department for Public Health, and every local health department in Kentucky support these regulations. Moreover, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and education officials all agree that facial coverings are essential to keeping children safe and in school. Studies from school districts in North Carolina, Utah, Florida, and St. Louis have shown that schools that use prevention strategies including facial coverings experience fewer cases of COVID-19, even when rates of community transmission are high.*

*I have the authority to veto these parts because this bill contains appropriations of federal pandemic funds for the hiring of critical shortage teachers, pension contributions for those teachers, and Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funds. I therefore am exercising my authority under Section 88*

*of the Kentucky Constitution to protect Kentucky's children.*

This the 9<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andy Beshear". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Andy Beshear  
Governor