



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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LT. GOVERNOR

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Michigan Senate
State Capitol Building
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Senators,

Today I am returning Enrolled Senate Bill 1253 to you without my approval.

Following the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic, the Legislature granted the then-equivalent of the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services broad power to issue orders to contain and eradicate epidemics. This bill would create a 28-day limit on those epidemic orders. Unfortunately, epidemics are not limited to 28 days. We should not so limit our ability to respond to them.

Over the past 9 months, the Department of Health and Human Services has served a crucial role in limiting the spread of the deadly coronavirus disease. In accordance with the advice of scientists and medical experts, they have acted swiftly to save lives by requiring the wearing of face masks and prohibiting gatherings associated with elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission. This bill would unreasonably place an unscientific and arbitrary time limit on their ability to respond not only to this pandemic, but to future health emergencies.

My number one priority has always been the safety and wellbeing of the people of Michigan. We all want this pandemic to be over. Let's do what needs to be done now so we can return to a strong economy and normal day-to-day activities. For the time being, we must continue to take precautions to keep ourselves and the people around us safe.

This bill would recklessly undermine the ability of the Department of Health and Human Services to stop the spread of this pandemic, putting the lives of countless Michiganders at risk. Therefore, I am vetoing it.

Respectfully,

Gretchen Whitmer
Governor