

March 29, 2022

Dr. Rochelle Walensky  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Director Walensky,

The current Order under Title 42 suspending the right to introduce certain persons into the United States has been an important tool in combatting the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. With encounters along our southern border surging and the highly-transmissible Omicron BA.2 subvariant emerging as the dominate strain in the United States, now is not the time to throw caution to the wind. I urge you to again renew this commonsense policy that has been in effect—under both Republican and Democratic Administrations—since March 2020.

As you are aware, in recent weeks, we have seen a steep rise in COVID-19 cases in the UK, Germany, Finland, Switzerland and other European nations as a result of the new BA.2 subvariant. Asian nations are also seeing all-time highs in infection rates. Shanghai, for example, was recently forced to implement its most expansive lockdown policy in nearly two years. An analysis by the UK Health Security Agency estimates that the BA.2 subvariant is transmitted roughly 80% faster than the previous Omicron variants that spread rapidly throughout the United States last winter.

These challenges are compounded by the recent surge in migration occurring along our southern border. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, encounters with migrants reached an all-time high of 1.7 million people. That is four times higher than the 400,000 encounters reported the previous year, and we are on pace to set a new record again this year. Through the first five months of FY22, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reports that Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) has experienced more than 838,000 migrant encounters. Unfortunately, due to annual migration patterns, those numbers are only expected to increase during the upcoming spring and summer months.

Under your leadership, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has modified the Order to exempt some of the most vulnerable populations such as unaccompanied minors and Ukrainian asylum-seekers. I commend you for these efforts

to strike the right balance between protecting public safety and preserving America's unique place as the "Shining City on a Hill" and a beacon of hope for the world.

I thank you for the work you have done to help contain the COVID-19 pandemic, and I again urge you to extend the current Order under Title 42 that has helped combat the spread of dangerous new COVID-19 strains within the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", written over a horizontal line.

Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator

cc: Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra