STATE OF MINNESOTA
L'Étoile du Nord

Office of
Governor Tim Walz &
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan

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Governor Walz Extends Peacetime Emergency

March 15, 2021

[ST. PAUL, MN] – As Minnesota ramps up vaccination distribution and monitors new variants of COVID-19, Governor Tim Walz today signed Executive Order 21-12 to extend the peacetime emergency in Minnesota. The peacetime emergency is critical to the state's ability to respond to the pandemic, including efficiently distributing the vaccine. The federal government and 48 other states remain in a state of emergency.

"We are closer than ever to ending this pandemic and returning to our daily lives – and we must keep up the momentum," said Governor Walz. **"The peacetime emergency enables us to safeguard the progress we've made, protect Minnesotans' health and well-being, and efficiently deliver the vaccine."**

Minnesota's peacetime emergency gives the state the tools necessary to quickly establish additional state vaccination sites and acquire supplies and technology to support the vaccine effort. It also supports the expansion Minnesota's testing capacity; protects Minnesotans against evictions and wage garnishment; provides expedited procurement power for personal protective equipment (PPE) and other equipment; allows Minnesota to follow the advice of public health experts in combatting the spread of COVID-19; protects workers from unsafe worker conditions; requires Minnesotans to wear a face covering in certain settings to prevent the spread of COVID-19; and provides economic relief and stability to Minnesotans and small businesses impacted by the pandemic.

"I am more hopeful than ever that we are on the cusp of putting this pandemic behind us, but we must continue to look out for the safety of our families, neighbors, and community members," said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **"These tools allow us to monitor new variants and protect the gains we've made in our fight against COVID-19."**

Governor Walz is committed to working collaboratively with the Minnesota Legislature to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and to ensure an orderly end of the peacetime emergency when it is no longer needed. With a light now at the end of the tunnel, Governor Walz has encouraged the Legislature to begin the work of enacting into law the core provisions of the emergency response that have been keeping Minnesotans safe. The laws will be needed to facilitate the wind-down of the peacetime emergency and related emergency executive orders.

Executive Order 21-12 has been unanimously approved by the Executive Council, which is made up of Governor Walz, Lt. Governor Flanagan, Attorney General Ellison, Secretary of State Simon, and State Auditor Blaha.

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