

Whitehouse Coronavirus Task Force

Earlier this month the CDC drafted an order requiring all passengers and employees to wear masks while on public transportation. The order would have required masks on all airplanes, buses, trains, and subways as well as transit hubs like airports and train stations. This action was the toughest federal mandate to date.

Photo by JOHANNES EISELE/AFP via Getty Images

The action was blocked by the White House, said two federal health officials. The coronavirus is still infecting more than 40,000 people every day. The motion had the support of the secretary of health and human services, Alex M. Azar, but Vice President Mike Pence reportedly refused to discuss it. Mike Pence heads the coronavirus task force. Taskforce officials have said that the choice to require masks should be left up to each individual state.

Political appointees at the White House and the Department of Health and Human Services have also been involved in rewriting the agency's guidelines on reopening schools and testing for the virus, bypassing the agency's scientists.

White House Blocked C.D.C. From Mandating Masks on Public Transit

This is only the latest action by the CDC to be blocked by the White House. At the end of last month, the coronavirus task force blocked another order by the CDC to keep cruise ships docked until February. This was opposed by Florida's tourism industry. Florida is an important swing state in the upcoming election.

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