

February 16, 2022

Word Count: 208

Attention editors
and producers:

Cascade Commentaries are provided for reprint in newspapers and other publications, with credit given to author(s) and Cascade. Contact Cascade to arrange print or broadcast interviews on this commentary topic.

Please contact:

Cascade Policy Institute
4850 SW Scholls Ferry Rd.
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

Phone: (503) 242-0900
Fax: (503) 242-3822

www.cascadepolicy.org
info@cascadepolicy.org

4850 SW Scholls Ferry Road
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

t: 503.242.0900
f: 503.242.3822
info@cascadepolicy.org
www.cascadepolicy.org

QuickPoint! - Why is Oregon One of the Last States with a Mask Mandate?

By Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

Why does Oregon still have a mask mandate? Oregon is now one of the [last](#) states to have a statewide mask mandate for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

If you listen closely to our public health experts, they say they're focused on [hospitalizations](#). Once the hospitalizations come down, they say *then* we can throw off our masks.

Way back in August, when Governor Kate Brown re-imposed the mask mandate, she said it was so we wouldn't overwhelm the state's hospitals.

Why is Oregon hung up on hospitalizations? It's simple: we have the [fewest](#) number of hospital beds per capita in the country.

That's not an accident. For decades, Oregon has had laws on the books that are designed to reduce the supply of hospital beds and other health care services. These laws, known as "Certificate of Need," are explicitly designed to shield health care providers from competition.

With Certificate of Need, existing hospitals can ask the state to halt the construction of new hospitals or the expansion of existing hospitals. All in the name of stifling competition.

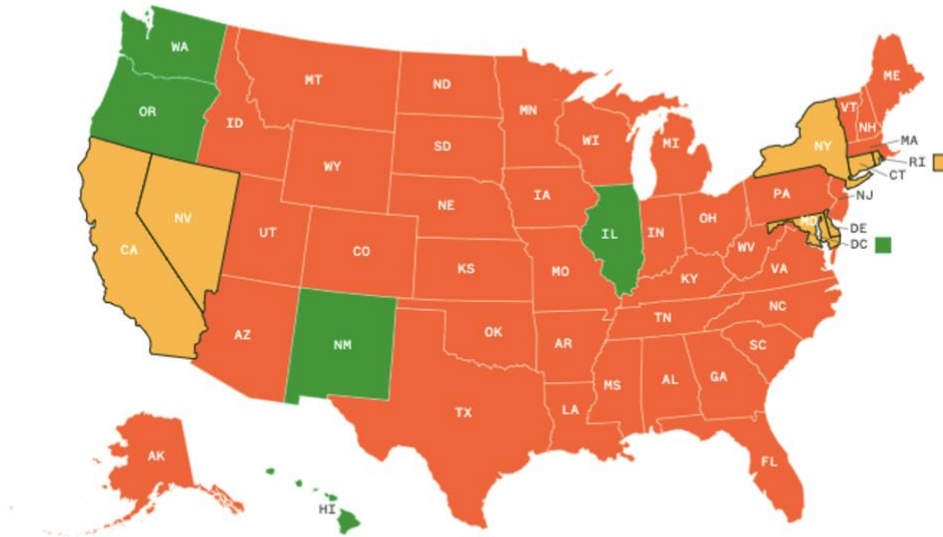
While the rest of the country is running around maskless, you can thank Oregon's Certificate of Need laws for making us the last state in the nation with a mask mandate.

(cont'd)



States quickly dropping mask mandates

■ No mask requirement ■ Mask requirement removed since late January
■ Masks required in some or all situations for vaccinated and unvaccinated people



Note: This map does not cover individual cities, municipalities or businesses, which may have their own mask rules.

Source: NBC News

Graphic: Angela Yang and Joe Murphy / NBC News

Eric Fruits, Ph.D. is Vice President of Research at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization.