***Resolved***

**WHEREAS,** A city ordinance delegating authority to the County Health Director to act also as the City Health Director has been in place in Omaha since 1949; and

**WHEREAS**, On January 13th, 2022, the City Health Director issued a mask order for the City of Omaha under her authority granted by City Code, in order to mitigate high COVID19 transmission and local hospital capacity; and

**WHEREAS**, The mask order expired on February 16, 2022, as transmission levels and COVID19 hospitalizations steadily decreased; and

**WHEREAS**, The Mayor of Omaha and an Omaha City Councilman have proposed an amendment to City Ordinance that would strip the City Health Director of the authority to make future orders or regulations to mitigate epidemics or pandemics impacting the City of Omaha; and

**WHEREAS,** Such authority would instead be delegated to a newly created position of Special Epidemic Health Director, who is also the Omaha Fire Department Medical Director and appointed by the Mayor of Omaha; and

**WHEREAS**, The actions of the Special Epidemic Health Director would require approval or rejection by the Mayor and City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, Neither the Special Epidemic Health Director, Mayor, nor City Council are chosen or elected for, or expected to possess public health expertise; and

**WHEREAS,** Mitigation and control of epidemics and pandemics for the public is a highly specialized and nuanced activity requiring significant knowledge and expertise in the field of Public Health; and

**WHEREAS,** Multiple appointed officials make decisions impacting the public on a daily basis, including the Medical Director of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, who is tasked to approve state-wide public health orders and approve Directed Health Measures for County health officials;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THIS BOARD OF HEALTH, DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEBRASKA,** To oppose the proposed changes to City Ordinance that would delegate epidemic and pandemic decision authority away from public health and the City Health Director, who is assured to possess the public health knowledge, expertise, and experience to make and carry out such actions effectively. The proposed ordinance changes would negatively impact the health and wellbeing of the public during such times of duress as an epidemic or pandemic, when swift and non-political decision-making is necessary to protect the lives of Omaha’s citizens. Multiple non-elected officials make decisions impacting these citizens on a daily basis, without interference. To now interfere in the City Health Director role’s codifed, delegated authority can only be construed as being politically influenced, rather than being driven by the long term public health needs of the community.

**DATED** this 16th day of March, 2022.

Motion to adopt by seconded by

**ADOPTED:** March 16th, 2022.

**YEAS:**

**ABSENT:**

Sunday Uribe, Recording Secretary