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## **Gov. Baker Misses Opportunity to Contain COVID-19 Spike**

### *Focus on social gatherings insufficient to control spread*

Boston, MA – Today, the Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) issued the following statement in response to Gov. Baker’s announcement of new public health measures designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth.

“We appreciate that Governor Baker recognizes that new actions must be taken to contain the surge in COVID cases, but he missed the opportunity to take the kinds of bold actions needed to protect all residents of Massachusetts,” said MPHA Executive Director Carlene Pavlos.

“Each of us must take responsibility to stop the spread, but COVID can’t be stopped by personal responsibility alone. Workers, people who need to double up in apartments because they were evicted, people living in shelters, and people who are incarcerated are just some of the folks suffering the most through no fault of their own.”

To truly protect all Massachusetts residents, Governor Baker should announce these actions this week:

- Release the data that shows social gatherings are the main sources of spread. His own administration’s data on COVID-19 clusters directly contradicts this assertion, showing only 67 cases out of more than 8,000 linked to social gatherings, but more than 1,000 connected to places where people work.
- Make a real commitment to safe workplaces for workers and patrons – including resources for inspections and enforcement to local boards of health and the Department of Labor Standards.
- Create a plan to prevent evictions and homelessness that won’t take months to be available to a fraction of the people that need it. If the Governor wants people to go home at 9:30, they need a stable home to go to.
- Implement a plan for preventing infections in correctional facilities. More testing is a good step, but testing alone is not a prevention strategy.”

The Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) is a nonprofit organization that promotes a healthy Massachusetts through advocacy, community organizing, and coalition building. We are leaders in the movement to create health equity by addressing the root causes of health and wellness. We promote policies that impact the major drivers of health outcomes, such as access to healthy food, safe affordable housing, and transportation. We also advocate for equitable public health services throughout the Commonwealth. To learn more, visit [www.mapublichealth.org](http://www.mapublichealth.org). ###