



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on September 14, 2023

Fearing Return of Mask and Vaccine Mandates, Texas City Council Votes to Not Enforce Them

Odessa, Texas, on Tuesday became the first city in the Lone Star State to prohibit the enforcement of any Covid-19 mandates within its borders.

Six of the seven members of the Odessa city council voted in favor of a resolution stating that the city “will not enforce” mask or vaccine mandates, lockdowns, or business restrictions. It further prohibits “the administration of a vaccine” to an individual “unless the provider obtains the individual’s informed consent before administering the vaccine.” (Councilman Gilbert Vasquez abstained from the vote.)



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“The citizens of the State of Texas and the City of Odessa were subjected to injustices in the form of overreaching government imposed mandates during the pandemic,” reads the [resolution](#). It declares that “unquantifiable damage was done to” both the citizens and businesses of Odessa by these mandates and that the mandates violate various God-given rights, including the “right to control over [one’s] own body.” And it contends that the mandates “put law enforcement in an unenviable position [of] enforcing pointless mandates not based in science or enacted in law.”

Councilman Chris Hanie presented the resolution, asking his fellow councilmen to “take a hard look” at it before casting their votes. With all the talk about rising Covid-19 case rates and the potential for the return of mandates and lockdowns, Hanie wanted to make sure Odessans’ liberties were secured.

“Nobody’s going to lose a job because they don’t get a stick or they have to wear a mask, nobody’s going to lose a job — not in the City of Odessa,” Hanie told [NewsWest9](#). “Just remember, oil dropped to nothing at the last pandemic when everybody got shut out of jobs, oil dropped to nothing. People were going hungry here, so, let’s remember that, not this time.”

“This is to maintain our freedoms that we have not already lost,” Hanie told the [Daily Caller](#) in a statement. “When we impose actions for the greater good, it’s important to remember that our bodies are our own.”

Future mandates aren’t the only concern. As [YourBasin](#) pointed out, “Employers throughout Texas, such as CVS and virtually all healthcare entities, still require COVID-19 vaccines for employment. Without a state law banning these mandates, Texans have no protection and will continue to be fired if not vaccinated.”

Republican State Representative Brian Harrison — who, as chief of staff at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services during the Trump administration, helped launch Operation Warp Speed to develop a Covid-19 vaccine — introduced a bill in the Legislature to ban all public and private vaccine mandates in Texas.



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According to YourBasin, “The bill garnered wide support among the public, stakeholders, and his colleagues. After passing the Senate Chamber (20-11 vote) and the House Public Health Committee (10-1 vote) with bi-partisan support, the bill was prevented from getting to the House floor by the House Calendars Committee, who instead decided to focus on the impeachment of Attorney General Ken Paxton.”

“Texans should be leading the fight against COVID tyranny, but since Texas House Leadership made the shocking decision to keep COVID vaccine mandates in Texas, I’m proud to partner with local officials to help deliver medical freedom for everyone in Odessa,” Harrison said in a statement to the Daily Caller.

At the city council meeting Tuesday, Harrison spoke passionately in favor of the anti-mandate resolution, which was based in part on his bill.

“Covid vaccine mandates have absolutely no place in the great and freedom-loving State of Texas,” he told the council.

“I hope that every city and county — not just in Texas but everywhere, every state that has not yet protected the medical freedom of their citizens — that their eyes are turned to Odessa, Texas, tonight, and to see the brave, bold, courageous, and I would say historic action that you are taking here tonight,” he said.

In an interview with NewsWest9, Harrison argued that vaccine mandates are contributing to the state’s healthcare and nursing shortages:

“We’re saying to otherwise healthy 18, 19, 20-year-olds, ‘if you want to go and serve your fellow man, you want to go be a nurse, you want to go be a doctor, you’ve got to get a shot that you probably don’t need,’” Harrison said. “Again, I’m not a doctor, but that decision should be up to that healthy 20-year-old and her or his doctor — not an employer.”

As Odessa leaps towards individual freedom and informed consent: “Texans are demanding medical freedom,” Harrison said. “Texans deserve medical freedom.” The hope is they won’t be the only one.

“Joe Biden and his administration are trying to bring back Covid tyranny for round two,” Harrison told [Fox News](#).

“I hope that tonight’s bold, brave action in defense of medical freedom, individual liberty, informed consent, I hope this causes city after city and other counties across Texas and across America to see the courage on display here and I hope the courage is contagious.”



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