כ׳ תשרי, ד׳ דחוה״מ סוכות תשפ״א

OUR KEHILLOS ARE CONFRONTED WITH THREE ALARMING REALITIES. EACH DEMANDS OUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

- Although, very thankfully, we see nothing of the horrific rates of infection from COVID-19 and the dreadful proportions of serious illness and death ר״ל of the past spring, still, there has been an indisputable rise of sickness again in our populations, some cases with serious consequences.

- The perception of our communities' laxity in compliance with governmental and medical guidelines of social distancing and masking, bolstered by a statistical actuality of a disproportionate rate of infection as compared to the general population, has painted us in a negative light across the country.

- Once again, our *batei chinuch* and *batei medrash* and *batei knesses* have been thrust into immediate jeopardy! The core of our existence, our *ruchnius* lifeline and our societal endurance are in the direct hazard of abrupt shutdown!

Consequently, we call on all *roshei eidah* to do everything in their power to ensure compliance with good health practices, including social distancing, masking and abstention from large gatherings. Peoples who have COVID-19 symptoms should stay home. The elderly and those with medical conditions must exercise special care. We are obligated על פי התורה to do everything possible to avoid even one occurrence of serious illness. Also, it is critical that we protect and assure the ongoing function of our schools and *shuls*; our survival depends on it!

Additionally, to facilitate an accurate assessment of the infection spread in our communities and to prevent further surge, it is important for people in high infection areas to get tested now for COVID-19.

Most importantly, we must pour out our hearts in *tefillah* to beseech *rachamim* for this ongoing *gezeirah* that still threatens the *ruchnius* and *gashmius* integrity of our *kehillos*.

הן קל כביר לא ימאס – אין הקב״ה מואס בתפלתן של רבים!

Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah of America

Vaad Roshei Yeshiva of Torah Umesorah