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**AS THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH AMID COVID-19'S "DARKEST HOUR,"
LEADINGAGE KANSAS CALLS THE PEOPLE OF KANSAS TO DO THEIR PART TO
PROTECT OLDER ADULTS**

Nationwide letter sent on behalf of aging services providers asks: "As COVID-19 surges, would you want your grandmother or grandfather to be exposed to the virus?"

November 23, 2020, Topeka, Kan-- LeadingAge Kansas joined a plea to every citizen in Kansas today, as part of a nationwide letter underscoring what everyone can do to protect the older adults they love from COVID-19. The pandemic has killed over 170,000 nationwide. This includes over 1,700 Kansans so far, including 1,200 Kansans 65 and older.

"The worst pandemic in a century has now reached its darkest hour," the letter says, which was signed by Debra Zehr, CEO of LeadingAge Kansas. The Kansas organization joined with other state partners of LeadingAge, a national organization that represents more than 5,000 aging-focused organizations helping millions of older adults every day.

"As Thanksgiving approaches, nursing homes and other care providers across Kansas are calling on everyone to do their part," said Zehr. "What we all do now will determine if we protect or endanger the lives of older Americans."

The letter includes a reminder about the CDC's guidance on masks, social distancing and handwashing.

"We fully understand that some people may not like these steps," the letter adds. "But please ask yourself: as COVID-19 surges, would you want your grandmother or grandfather to be exposed to the virus?"

The full text of today's [open letter is available here](#).

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[LeadingAge Kansas](#) is an association of 160 not-for-profit aging services providers dedicated to serving the needs of aging Kansans. We advance policies, promote practices and learning that empowers our members to help seniors live fully as they age. Our members serve nearly 20,000 seniors in Kansas each day.