

## Chris Taggart

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**From:** ALLEN B GATES <abgates1\_92@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2020 12:35 PM  
**To:** Ravalli County Commissioners Office  
**Cc:** Chris Taggart  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Covid-19 Containment Plan  
**Attachments:** Ravalli County Commissioner Letter 073120.docx

Dear Commissioners

The virus is out of control. Most people aren't taking it seriously. Ignorance and politics are major barriers to controlling the virus. Attached is a plan for reducing ignorance and controlling the virus. It's based on proven behavioral change principles. However, it requires fact based, non-political leadership. Please provide that leadership. I will assist as I can.

Best Regards,

Allen B Gates  
Stensville

My credentials for developing the plan are:

- Partner in an organizational change consulting firm.
- Co-author of an organizational change book published by the firm.
- Senior executive who lead three major change efforts in industry using the behavioral change principles.
- BSME and MSME, University of Nevada, Reno, Reno, SM Mgt (MIT Sloan Fellow), PhD, ME, Case-Western Reserve University.
- Senior management positions in industry, government, and academia.

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## Open letter to Ravalli County Commissioners

Dear Commissioners:

The Covid-19 pandemic is out of control globally. The world, America, and Montana are in perilous states. Significant changes in our individual and collective behaviors are critical to our futures! I'm asking you to step up to the essential leadership challenge. We need efficient and effective leadership that focuses on stopping the pandemic! Here's a useful way to think about leadership. Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander in World War II and 34<sup>th</sup> President said

"leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it"

There is a well-established way to practice above leadership art. There are four steps that require collaboration with a set of influential stakeholders. The stakeholder candidates come from various groups: clergy leaders, local, county, and state political leaders, business leaders, medical leaders, citizens, and public health leaders.

The first step is to don the mantle of anti-Covid-19 leadership. Accept the responsibility and accountability, regardless of party, to lead us out of this pandemic. Please Lead!

The second step is for you to describe a compelling, credible case for change. Describe what behaviors need to change and why. Please Lead!

The third step is for you to describe a compelling, credible vision of success. Describe what successful behaviors look like. Please Lead!

The fourth step is for you to develop a compelling, credible going forward plan to achieve the vision of success. Please Lead!

I ask to set politics aside! Base what you say and do on facts and science. *Note: A fact is something that actually exists! A fact has one or more consequences, each consequence is itself a fact!*

What follows is my personal views on how to proceed. You may use them as you choose (or not).

### **A personal view of the case for change**

Some key Covid-19 facts and consequences are: (1) it is highly contagious, (2) someone can unknowingly be a contagious carrier, infecting many others, (2) the primary transmission mode is close, sustained person-person proximity to others, (3) it is deadly for many elderly or those with poor health, (4) jobs, economic recovery, and education depend on gaining control over Covid-19 transmission, and (5) the flu season will soon be here, further overloading our health system. Time is short!

The majority of Americans and Montanans are **not** following the simple, cheap, effective remedies recommended by public health officials. The most effective remedies are (1) wear a face mask, (2) stay at least six feet from others, (3) wash/sanitize hands frequently, (4) minimize touching face, eyes, and mouth and (5) avoid large crowds.

Many claim Covid-19 is a hoax! As one dying patient told a nurse, "I believe I made a mistake, I thought it was a hoax! It isn't!" It is doubtful that any of the 4M+ who have experienced the disease agree that it's a hoax! It is doubtful that any friends or relatives of those 147K+ who have died agree it's a hoax!

Many **falsely** claim it's their right to not wear a face mask regardless of the consequences to others or to society. According to the American Bar Association two hundred years of law give states broad pandemic authorities. The 10th Amendment, which gives states all powers not specifically given to the federal **government**, allows them the **authority** to take **public health** emergency actions, such as setting quarantines and business restrictions.

The Constitution does not give individuals the **unlawful and immoral right** to contribute to (1) **unnecessary** sickness and death of others and (2) **unnecessary** job and economic loss of Montanans. It does not give the **unlawful and immoral right** to a single individual to damage or destroy our society. According to The Montana Post (April 2020), a one hundred fifteen-year-old Supreme Court precedent makes it clear that the government can compel or restrict acts to prevent the spread of disease. *Newsweek columnist Robert J. Samuelson recently wrote: "We face a choice between a society where people accept modest sacrifices for a common good or a more contentious society where groups selfishly protect their own benefits."* (Quoted in the Santa Clara University Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, V. 5, N. 1 Spring 1992 article, "The Common Good")

Ensuring compliance will be a major challenge! Morality cannot be legislated! Moral and civic actions must be voluntary. Failure to implement the remedies are civic and moral failures. Each of us must implement the remedies. If we don't, the future is grim! The window is fast closing! Only we, acting individually and collectively, can fix it.

The recent resignations of public health professionals is concerning. What does it mean for controlling the virus?

#### **A personal view of the vision of success**

Elected leaders have a special burden to lead in this awful pandemic. You need to educate yourselves, and the public, about rights the Constitution gives and restricts in pandemics. Given the widespread ignorance about Constitutional rights and the political polarization, it will be extraordinarily difficult.

Here's what success looks like! The foundation for success is a commitment to serve our own interests simultaneously with our collective interests. We need to be our brother's keepers! We need to act toward others as we would have others act toward us. Controlling the virus and getting jobs and education back are two sides of the same coin! Success looks like the **false assertion** that individual rights trump collective is no longer made by the majority of Montanans. Success looks like common good rights override individual rights! Here are examples of other accepted common good rights : (1) No one has the right to smoke in bars and restaurants, (2) No one has the right to not use seatbelts, (3) No one under 18 has the right to ride a motorcycle without a helmet, and (4)no one has the right to drive drunk!

***Success looks like broad agreement that no one has the right to expose others to Corona-19 virus!***

Montanans in large numbers voluntarily decide to act civically and morally! Only we can fix it!  
Success means we individually and collectively own the problem!

**Our Motto: If is to be, it's up to me!**

Therefore. success looks like Montanans voluntarily (1) wear a face mask, (2) stay at least six feet from others, (3) wash/sanitize hands frequently, (4) minimize touching face, eyes, and mouth and (5) avoid large crowds.

## **A personal view of the going forward plan**

The going forward plan is to develop and implement a plan, based on proven change behavioral principles, to control the Ravalli County virus! The overriding purpose is to obtain voluntary commitment to and implementation of the five remedies above by the Ravalli County majority. Governor Bullock's mandate to wear masks is a major step forward, but it's only the first step! Here are the five proven behavioral change principles that provide guidance.

1. Principle 1: Identify and engage a small volunteer task force of influential stakeholders (clergy, local, county, and state political leaders, business leaders, medical leaders, citizens, public health leaders, news media leaders, lawyers) who care about controlling the virus. They must be willing to devote significant time over the next several weeks!
2. Principle 2: Appoint a County Commissioner as the leader.
3. Principle 3: Make the case for change. Describe what needs to be different and why on a single page. Answer the question, why are we collectively dissatisfied with our current Covid-19 condition and efforts to control it?
4. Principle 4: Describe what successful change looks like. Describe the benefits that will be gained on a single page. Answer the question, what positive results will be obtained?
5. Principle 5: Describe the plan to obtain the vision of success. Describe what specific actions are to be taken, who is responsible for completing the action, and when will it be completed. Example actions could be:
  - a. Hold a series of listening and education sessions to communicate drafts of the case for change, the vision of success, and the going forward plan. (*Update as necessary.*)
  - b. Clergy use sermons to communicate the case for change, the vision of success and the going forward plan.
  - c. News media communicate the case for change, the vision of success and the going forward plan.
  - d. Business leaders practice the above remedies and encourage all businesses to practice them.
  - e. Suspend business licenses for those businesses that don't comply with the Governor's mandate.
  - f. Enforce the Governor's mandate.

I note with interest the Montana Attorney General Opinion Nr 9, July 21, 1993.

The sheriff has the primary duty to enforce county and state laws throughout the county. If local enforcement is lacking, the sheriff must undertake such enforcement.

I'd be pleased to meet with you to discuss how to proceed.

Sincerely,

Allen B Gates  
Stevensville