

Chris Taggart

From: Warren Neyenhuis <warren.neyenhuis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 8:48 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments for Meeting on Response to COVID-19

To the Commissioners:

I am writing to urge the Commissioners to immediately take actions to curb the dangerous uptick of COVID-19 positive cases in Ravalli County. As a resident since 1974 and a former county employee, I am well aware of how politics plays a major role in decision making. However, this truly is not about politics, but about health and common sense.

I urge the Commissioners to follow the mandates established by the governor and supported by medical professionals which include the wearing of masks in public places as well as appropriate social distancing and consistent handwashing. By refusing to do so, you are putting peoples' health at risk and business owners livelihoods in jeopardy.

As evidenced by the NY Times article about masking here in Hamilton, businesses who make a choice to require masks are faced daily with angry people arguing with them about their decision. On the other hand, businesses that do not enforce mandatory masking are losing customers who refuse to enter an establishment where masks are not required. While I have always been a strong proponent of "Shop Locally", I have found myself doing major shopping in Missoula where masks are required and generally better accepted.

By enforcing a mask mandate, you would, first and foremost, be addressing serious health issues facing our Ravalli County citizens. Secondly, you would be putting all businesses on an even footing. We have so many fine small businesses in the Valley. They operate on a very thin profit margin and many are understandably leery of enforcing a mask mandate if all businesses are not held to the same standard.

You can accomplish so much by simply doing the right thing - for the health and for the economics of our community.

Sincerely,
Peggy Tonon

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