

Chris Taggart

From: Kierstin Schmitt <montanaks@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 11:44 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office; Greg Chilcott; Jeff Burrows
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Freedom from what?

Thank you, Chris, for responding. I understand that you're very busy with the duties of the Commission. I frankly don't have time to address this situation either. However, it's very important to me to understand what our County Commissioners are choosing to do and not do with regard to the Covid precautions as leaders in our community. Your actions matter. Your action, or inaction, set the tone for the county.

I realize that the Commission doesn't have the authority to enforce the mandate but you do have a role to guide the citizenry on best practices because this is not just very serious public health matter, it's a very serious economic one too. From a public policy perspective, it seems to me that the Commission wants businesses, schools, etc to stay open and functioning. The solution is worse than the problem if folks don't follow the mandate and close for safety reasons. No business, school, etc. wants to be responsible and liable for infecting their customers, employees, staff, students.

Because wearing masks has now become a political issue by those that don't want to wear one, we have a very serious problem. How many more Covid patients can our hospital handle before they have to "ration" care? Do you know? Maybe this isn't part of the day to day business that you're concerned about but trust me, it concerns most people in the county. Our citizens, especially those most vulnerable, and medical community deserve our support by showing leadership and modeling the mask mandate.

You state that "[The biggest worry I have, right now, is how it all impacts our community in the long term](#)". I share that concern. I read the statement and I'm grateful for it. However, it's too little too late. I'm sure you're aware of the Republican event at the fairgrounds where most chose not wear masks even though they were provided. This is a sign of trouble ahead, probably 2 weeks from now, just like the event they held at the rodeo grounds on Oct. 10th. How many of those people are now inflected and spreading it to family, friends, or the person next to them at Super 1??

Apparently getting certain people elected is more important than protecting our citizens. This being a county building, I feel it's the County's responsibility to refuse service to those that don't follow the state mandate. "Personal responsibility" is not a protective health measure and not wearing a mask does not equal freedom. It's selfish and unAmerican. History will not be kind to those that have chosen this route.

[Explain why it is, that in the counties where all of this is enforced to the letter and beyond, \(gold standard enforcement, according the governor,\) is the infection rate just as high, or higher than the counties which have taken a more liberal approach to it? : What counties are you referring to here?](#) Jeff Burrows also gave me the excuse. Must be a talking point. Just because other counties were strict at some point is not a reason to ignore the science and the mandate. We are not "other" counties, we are Ravalli County. If you question the science, I hope you're reaching out to the experts that live in our community that are working on this very virus at RML. I think they can give you up-to-date information if allowable.

Please be a leader and a role model by supporting our medical and business community by doing more than just "encouraging" people to follow the mandate.

If you wear, you care.

Thank you for your time,

Kierstin Schmitt

PS I included Greg and Jeff since I didn't hear back from them and so they can see my reply.

On Oct 29, 2020, at 1:08 PM, Chris A. Hoffman <CAHoffman@rc.mt.gov> wrote:

I frankly don't have the time for either side of this debate...and it is a debate, Kierstin. The world keeps on spinning, and we still have day to day business to conduct.

The biggest worry I have, right now, is how it all impacts our community in the long term. Read our latest statement.

For me, personally, I'll wear a mask when I need to, but I'm more convinced by the numbers. I'm looking at infection rates. Explain why it is, that in the counties where all of this is enforced to the letter and beyond, (gold standard enforcement, according the governor,) is the infection rate just as high, or higher than the counties which have taken a more liberal approach to it?

In the end, it has never been up any board of county commissioners whether or not to enforce. Period.

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From: Kierstin Schmitt <montanaks@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 10:44 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office <commissioners@rc.mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Freedom from what?

Hello Commissioners,

Do you support this effort? Please reply individually. We deserve to know where you stand. And if so, please explain how not wearing a mask = freedom?

https://ravallirepublic.com/news/state-and-regional/article_6e49833a-32e9-51b9-9f43-e2acb52cedf4.html#tracking-source=home-the-latest

Thank you,
Kierstin Schmitt
Corvallis

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