



Arvada  
Aurora  
Bennett  
Boulder  
Bow Mar  
Brighton  
Broomfield  
Castle Pines  
Castle Rock  
Centennial  
Cherry Hills Village  
Columbine Valley  
Commerce City  
Denver  
Edgewater  
Englewood  
Erie  
Federal Heights  
Foxfield  
Glendale  
Golden  
Greenwood Village  
Lafayette  
Lakewood  
Littleton  
Lone Tree  
Longmont  
Louisville  
Lyons  
Morrison  
Nederland  
Northglenn  
Parker  
Sheridan  
Superior  
Thornton  
Westminster  
Wheat Ridge

November 23, 2020

Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor of Colorado

Dear Governor Polis,

With our counties and more than half of Colorado's population at Level Red we are extremely concerned about the looming potential loss of life and the economic effects of another shutdown. We agree that we must do better and do our part to flatten the curve to avoid exceeding our hospital capacity which would lead to a reduction in quality of care, rationing of care, and increasing mortality rates. However, to be a good partner to the state, we need a clearer understanding of the data that is driving decision making to ensure effective messaging. There is also broad agreement that the state must evenly apply and consistently enforce public health orders, or our messaging and enforcement will lack credibility. To this end, we would like to engage in a dialogue with your team and our public health directors as soon as possible to discuss our path forward.

On our November 19 call, Weld County was raised repeatedly as an example of how inconsistent enforcement of public health orders and application of Dial level criteria creates serious challenges for metro area elected officials and public health departments. There is broad agreement that the state must evenly apply and consistently enforce public health orders. For example, restaurants that refuse to close should face suspension and/or revocation of state licenses. Additionally, local governments that refuse to enforce public health orders should not receive state aid; willful non-compliance jeopardizes the lives of their residents and those in neighboring counties. Given that capacity in our regional hospital network is the critical indicator for shutdown at Level Purple, consistent, regional enforcement is more critical now than ever before.

Data suggests that Coloradans want to and are willing to do the right thing if they understand what is being asked of them and why. According to the latest Oct 19-Nov 1 Gallup poll, 61% of Americans recognized that the situation was getting worse and 64% believed that the best way to reduce transmission was for healthy people to stay home as much as possible. The recent changes in the Dial, and the perception that it is an indicator rather than a public health order, have created suspicion and confusion. Messaging from the state should be clear that this is the "last chance" to do the right thing before we breach our hospital capacity and force another lockdown. It was suggested that the state look at using alternate methods, perhaps modeled on Amber Alerts, to communicate the new restrictions and urgency directly; Utah recently used its Wireless Emergency Alert system for this purpose.

We understand that we are all learning as we go, but nine months into this crisis, there is widespread agreement that we must improve communication and coordination. Like our healthcare network, our counties and cities are interdependent and our actions — or inaction — have ramifications beyond our boundaries. This is underscored in the frustration expressed by the mayor of a statutory town that is split between two counties — one that chose to enforce public health orders and the other that did not. Working together is essential to saving lives and local businesses.

We sincerely appreciate the time and efforts of your team, and Kacey Wulff in particular. We would like to have a meeting with you and your team to discuss our concerns and how we as a region and state can move forward together.

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