



## DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**CHRIS BOICE TIM FREEMAN TOM KRESS**

Douglas County Courthouse, Room 217  
1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 19, 2020**

### **Douglas County Commissioners Issue Statement About Two Week Pause**

(Douglas County, Ore.) Douglas County Commissioners have concerns about Governor Brown's new mandate for a "Two Week Pause" that began yesterday, November 18, 2020, the same concerns we stated in our August 28, 2020, [press release](#). First and foremost, **we stand with, represent and support** the citizens and businesses operating in Douglas County. We want our citizens to be healthy and have access to necessary services; to help our businesses succeed; and for everyone in our county to continue to move forward to social and economic stability. Second, we do not support county "enforcement" of State issued COVID guidelines. Instead, as the local public health authority, we feel it is paramount for State officials to provide easy to understand, timely access to the latest information, resources and medical guidance in order to educate residents about COVID that allows them to make informed, responsible decisions. We feel that most people will do the right thing, if given the opportunity and knowledge to do so. We cannot in good conscience condone citing or potentially arresting people for gathering with family to give thanks on Thanksgiving or for attending Church services. Third, while we do not speak on behalf of other Oregon counties, we do know that it is impossible for the State to understand all the unique needs and complexities of each and every one of our 36 diverse Oregon counties. The State should not question our ability to meet the needs of our constituents, instead they should support and coordinate with the Commissioners in each of our Counties. The Governor did not consult with County Commissioners or other local elected representatives before issuing this state-wide mandate. It is imperative that the State realizes that the needs will be different for each individual county. This is definitely not a 'one-size fits all scenario', it should be a 36 size scenario with a supportive, collaborative county-by-county assessment of need.

While we understand the need for increased compliance with the latest recommendations from organizations like the CDC and Douglas Public Health Network due to the recent dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases, we do not agree with a state-wide approach and we do not agree that local law enforcement agencies should be charged with enforcing these somewhat draconian rules against our citizens mandated without local consultation by Governor Brown.

The Douglas County Commissioners believe that there must be a better balance between the socio-economic damage being done and the fight to stop or slow the spread of COVID-19. While we have seen a rise in COVID-19 cases, we have also seen businesses close, with undoubtedly more to come. We have seen families suffer, and now more so at a time when they should be coming together for the holidays. We see children struggle as they want and need to be back in school. The list goes on and on... We fear that with this new shutdown and the coming metrics to follow, that those unintended consequences will continue to rise. Our communities can't bear much more.

As Douglas County Commissioners, we still believe, as we always have, that if the citizens of Douglas County are provided with the proper information on how to make their own choices about what are best for them and their fellow citizens, that most will choose to do so. With that being said, it is important to know that cases of COVID-19 are on the rise, the mandates and regulations are increasing as a result, and the only way to reverse the trend is to be more diligent in trying to slow or stop the spread. The virus is real, it is not the flu, people are dying in Douglas County, and our hospital is on the verge of being overwhelmed. We need everyone take this seriously, for the sake of our local businesses, our youth who want and need to be back in school, our elderly who are the most vulnerable, and for each other.

###

Contact **Tamara Howell**, Douglas County Emergency Communications & Community Engagement Specialist (PIO)  
(541) 670-2804 cell - (541) 957-4896 office - [tjhowell@co.douglas.or.us](mailto:tjhowell@co.douglas.or.us)