

Public Comment
June 16, 2020

Dear Supervisors:

I would like to encourage the Board to take up its responsibility to protect the citizens of Plumas County. This is the Board's most essential responsibility. At this point the Board is failing to meet this responsibility.

Many might remember me as a past reporter for Feather Publishing. However, I was a scientist long before that.

Science has two major advantages over other ways of arriving at the truth. First, the search for truth is designed to be objective. Scientists studying a particular problem often differ in their opinions. However, scientists are taught to base their opinions on data published in peer reviewed science journals. "Show me the data" is a classic refrain from scientists when they disagree.

Secondly, scientists are encouraged to base their opinions on all of the available objective data, not just their own data, or those of their friends, and to change their opinions when they believe the available evidence warrants it.

Scientists as a group work on a wide variety of problems. However, individual scientists spend their careers specializing and working on a limited number of problems.

Only a relatively small number of scientists, usually trained physicians, spend their careers studying public health and contagious diseases. An even smaller number of scientists study pandemics.

A good scientist would put his or her greatest faith in the objective results of those scientists who have been studying a given question. A good scientist would not put her or his faith in the data of only a few scientists or in hearsay heard on the street or from a single media outlet.

As far as I can tell, most of those scientists who have made a career of studying pandemics are very concerned that too many Americans are acting as if the current deadly Covid-19 pandemic is over. These experts believe that this is leading to an upsurge in both new cases and in deaths from Covid-19 in California, Nevada and other states since Memorial Day .

I recently returned to Quincy and was shocked by the number of staff and customers in local establishments not wearing masks and keeping social distances. We wear masks, etc in order to protect the lives of the people in our county. Two weeks ago I went into SavOn in Quincy, for instance, and all of the visible staff and 75% of customers were wearing masks. When I returned to SavOn a week later, only a third to a half of the visible staff were wearing masks and only a half of the customers were. When I asked the manager why, he said that those members of his staff that weren't wearing masks had letters from their doctors saying they didn't have to wear masks. One cashier told me that she "couldn't breath wearing a mask." I mentioned that when people are dying from Covid-19 they drown as their lungs are filling up with liquid. By not wearing a mask, that she is putting the community at risk and potentially contributing to the death of children, adults and seniors in our community.

By allowing loopholes in our Health Agency order requiring face masks, so that many people don't have to wear masks, and by not supporting our local businesses and health leaders in Plumas County combat Covid-19 by enforcing the mask-wearing mandate, the Board is potentially also contributing to the death of children, adults and seniors in our community.

By failing to do "due diligence," the Board is opening our county up to possible law suits by the families of those killed by Covid-19. We can't afford that. Most importantly, the Board is making a decision to turn a blind eye to the danger at our gate. As the attached image displays, we are surrounded by hotbeds of Covid-19 and there is a good chance Covid-19 will find its way here soon (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-us-cases.html>). With our current policies, we are sitting ducks.

We have a large number of elderly in our county. We have a large number of poor people who couldn't afford the thousands of dollars required for a helicopter flight to Reno, Chico or Sacramento and we don't have the resources to treat large numbers of severely sick Covid-19 patients in Plumas County.

This is not the first time Plumas County has faced a pandemic of this sort and failed to properly enforce proper hygiene and had people die as a result. The most recent newsletter of the Plumas County Museum Association for April, 2020 recounts the story of the 1918 influenza pandemic in Plumas County (I would recommend the newspaper and appropriate county departments publish this article on their websites.

I implore members to reverse course and not allow political considerations to allow the Covid-19 pandemic to return to Plumas County with the county unprotected.

Concerning opening up prematurely to Covid-19: "I'm growing increasingly concerned that we may be approaching the precipice — the precipice of a disaster," said Lina Hidalgo, the Harris County judge who is the top official for the Texas county's five million residents. [cbsnews.com](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/harris-county-judge-warns-of-covid-19-disaster/) on June 13, 2020

Hot spots in the United States

How the number of new cases has changed in the last 14 days



Falling

About the same

Rising →

Site Visited June 13, 2020



Last 14 days

California

148,788

total cases

Nevada

10,992

7-day average

Mar. 1 June 12