

September 9, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

I just learned that the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners is holding a special meeting tonight regarding the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department's COVID-19 mask order. This issue is important to me because I have lost friends who died from COVID-19, I have other family members and friends who are immune-system compromised, and have still other friends who are young and in typically great health and yet they contracted COVID and are experiencing worrying long-term COVID symptoms.

I went to the county health department site to read it: [https://www.bldhd.org/local/upload/file/BLDHD%20Public%20Health%20Order%2027\\_2021.pdf](https://www.bldhd.org/local/upload/file/BLDHD%20Public%20Health%20Order%2027_2021.pdf). It is impressive. The health department provided clear documentation about the reasoning for this health order. I am thankful for the health department doing its due diligence and being so clear.

I was also grateful to the health department for its system of vaccinating residents. It was so orderly, and I was glad I got my shots at the school gym in Suttons Bay because I saw so many people I knew and I felt a great sense of our strong community coming together. So many eyes were shining bright above our masks. I've also been impressed with parents who have taken the time to talk with their children about masking in a way that is assuring, inspiring, and makes sense –“super heroes” wear masks because they are protecting others.

I don't know why you are discussing the COVID health order tonight. But given some of the unfortunate divisiveness in our country, I certainly hope you will reaffirm the health department's important role and area of expertise, and not fall into the trap of the many politicized opinions that are out there in the world regarding masks, nor health claims that have not been confirmed by those in the health care field. This is too important, and masking is not the end of the world. Be adult. Leave COVID protocols for our community in the hands of the people who are health experts.

I do not want to see the children of our community endangered by this new COVID variant, nor our teachers, food service staff, bus drivers, and family members. I don't want to lose another person I love. Don't make this political.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenifer Murray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jenifer Murray  
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