

Laurel Evans

Subject: FW: Public Comment I intend to offer the Board of Commissioners tomorrow.

From: Jay Johnson <jaysjohnson43@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, February 8, 2021 5:17 PM

To: Gwenne Allgaier <gwenne@me.com>; Michelle Crocker <mcrocker@leelanau.gov>

Subject: Public Comment I intend to offer the Board of Commissioners tomorrow.

I ask that the following be read to the Board if I am unable to do so.

My name is Jay Johnson, I have lived in Empire Township since 2005.

While I am not an epidemiologist, I have a B.A. in Economics, a J.D. in Law, an M.S. in Forensic Science, and I completed a one-year fellowship in legal medicine at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology and stayed on as legal counsel to that Institute for an additional two years. I then served 15 years as a lawyer at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, one of our nation's most trusted scientific institutions. Throughout my career I have relied on scientific evidence to support important decisions. I believe we will get out of the economic depression caused by the Covid19 pandemic, but only if we base our decisions on medical science.

I am speaking today in opposition to Chairman Bunek's motion to adopt the Great Barrington Declaration and to renew my call for all members of the Board of Commissioners to lead by example and begin wearing masks while attending Board meetings. To that end, I have three sources: Munson Healthcare, the Benzie-Leelanau Health Department, and Fox News.

The following is a verbatim statement of Munson Healthcare's views on the Great Barrington Declaration.

"The views and opinions expressed in a recent Facebook post by an independent provider, who is credentialed to practice at Munson Medical Center, do not represent those of Munson Healthcare, and **Munson Healthcare strongly disagrees with many elements within the post regarding the Great Barrington Declaration. We disagree with several of the premises of the Great**

Barrington Declaration including allowing populations to reach herd immunity which most public health experts agree is not sound or valid.”

The following is a verbatim statement of the Benzie-Leelanau Health Department.

“Even with a vaccine, we can’t let our guard down. Vaccines are only one tool in our toolbox. Until we have about 70% of our population vaccinated, we still need to be cautious.

Keep your distance (6 or more feet from people outside your immediate household).

Wear your mask when you go out.

Wash your hands frequently (or use hand sanitizer with 60% or more alcohol).

Follow your doctor’s trusted advice and get recommended appointments, screenings, and treatments to ensure you’re at your healthiest.”

But don’t just take Munson’s and the Health Department’s advice. Pay heed to this Fox News Public Service Announcement that has been airing since February 2, 2021.

“We’ve been through a lot. We’re getting through it together. It was a challenge unprecedented. And so many rose to the occasion. Now, with the end in sight, we have to keep up the fight. **Wear a mask, distance where possible; and if you can, get the vaccine. America we’re in this together.**”

On a closing note, I applaud our state and local health departments whose proactive measures to prevent the spread of Covid19 are making great progress. As of yesterday, the rate of new Covid19 infections in Leelanau County was fewer than 9 cases per 100,000 population and fewer than 12 cases per 100,000 throughout Michigan. Other states are making less progress. Virginia has 39 cases per 100,000. Maryland has 21 cases per 100,000. Sources: Bridge Magazine and the Washington Post, February 8, 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.