



May 12, 2020

Request from Mike Reuter, Mayor, City of Kalama

Subject: Petition of Governor Inslee to Move Cowlitz County to Stage 2 COVID-19 Response

Honorable Commissioners:

I write to you out of a sense of urgency for the protection of both the health and economic wellbeing of the City of Kalama. Our community is feeling the strain of Governor Inslee's Stay Home Stay Healthy Order yet our county has a comparatively low percentage of COVID-19 infection rate, few hospitalizations, no intubations/ventilators and thankfully no COVID-19 related deaths. While, I struggle to reconcile the economic impact of the order within my community against the health of every citizen; ultimately, I recognize our local government is subordinate to the State. I, as the mayor, am subordinate to the governor. I am not interested in going against the governor, but I request that he reconsider the status of Cowlitz County.

Based on my understanding of what Governor Inslee has required of the first eleven counties eligible to move to stage two I request the BOCC direct county staff to develop a plan to petition Governor Inslee to include Cowlitz County in the move to phase two. This petition requires some specific action.

The local Health and Human Services Chief Medical Officer must recommend the county transition to the next phase, and the Board of Commissioners must advance that recommendation to Governor Inslee. I assume Dr. Krager will require a plan for the transition and opening of public areas. Please direct county staff to expedite the development of a satisfactory plan. I also understand, based on the Governor Inslee's press conference today, that sufficient supplies and personnel will be required to provide contact tracing of infection to implement mandatory quarantine/home isolation of entire family units for 14 days. If we as a county can demonstrate that we are prepared to provide a plan and coordinate resources with the state to contact trace, then perhaps we can convince Governor Inslee that weeks without new cases should not be the only threshold for advancement to stage two of the recovery plan. A low initial percentage of positive cases combined with health care facility capacity, no fatalities and a willingness to cooperatively implement his recovery plan through the local coordination of the "contact tracing army" may convince the governor that we in Cowlitz County are ideal for phase two recovery.

Our local restaurants, from McMenamins to The Burger Bar, will benefit from incremental progress like opening outdoor seating where distances can be maintained. Our collective goal is economic prosperity while providing for the physical health of our citizens.

Thank you,

Mayor Mike Reuter