



OKANOGAN COUNTY

Board of Commissioners

Chris Branch
Commissioner District 1
Andy Hover
Commissioner District 2
Jim DeTro
Commissioner District 3
Laleña Johns
Clerk of the Board

May 18, 2020

Dear Citizens of Okanogan County,

These are unprecedented times. We, as elected officials, know and feel the unrest in our County, State and Nation. Many of you, rightly so, are concerned about the health of your family, friends and neighbors, as well as their financial stability. It is times like these that can divide communities, however we are confident that will not be the case in Okanogan County.

We know that the residents of Okanogan County are resilient and can unite to show that we have what it takes to successfully get back on our feet. It may require acting or doing things in a slightly different manner than what we are used to. However, if we show that we are united in an understanding that to make our communities whole again these are the actions that must be taken, at least for a time, we can move faster toward our common goal.

We are fighting a common enemy. It is not your neighbor or a person of a different political affiliation or someone who feels differently than you. It is a challenging new virus which, as of yet, has no cure and no inoculation. What we know for sure is that we can mitigate the spread of the disease if we follow appropriate health guidelines. Just as our Nation has pulled together in times of war and economic depression, we can succeed in keeping the vulnerable individuals of our community alive.

As members of the Okanogan County Health Board of Directors, the Okanogan County Commissioners are working toward application to the state for a variance in order to get more businesses and activities open. The requirement that we not have positive test results over the last three week period is one criteria that may be nearly impossible to achieve. Counties that are finding it difficult to meet the variance requirement are pressuring the Governor's office to look closely at the impossibilities

of the current requirements, while emphasizing our ability and commitment to open in a responsible and accountable fashion. As we work toward that end we are recommending that businesses and the general public learn and practice all measures necessary to prevent the spread of the COVID virus. We are working with our Economic Development Organization, the Economic Alliance, to develop the necessary strategies to open all our businesses in the fair and equitable manner. These strategies include guidance documents provided by the State to minimize the risk of virus transmission. This information is most readily available at www.economic-alliance.com.

We need the help and support of our citizens to demonstrate that we have what it takes to stay safe as a County. Our goal is to show that local control of the situation remains the best course of action to help our citizens.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OKANOGAN, WASHINGTON



Jim DeTro, Chairman



Chris Branch, Member



Andy Hover, Member