

Tuolumne County
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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE

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April 30, 2020

Via Email

govapps.gov.ca.gov/gov40mail

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
State of California
State Capitol, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Via Email

Sonia.Angell@cdph.ca.gov

Dr. Sonia Y. Angell,
State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health
P.O. Box 997377, MS 0500
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377

Re: Consideration of Allowing Local Jurisdictions to Begin to Reopen

Dear Governor Newsom and Dr. Angell;

The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors wishes to thank you and your administration for your guidance and leadership during this coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Your immediate actions have decreased the spread of the disease within the state, reduced the surge impact of hospitals, and greatly limited the death rate.

Tuolumne County has followed the State's guidelines and as a result only has 4 residents who have tested positive, however none of those individuals acquired the disease within the County. Our County has case-rate of 2 per 100,000, compared to the 109.4 per 100,000 residents in the State of California. The County has not experienced any COVID-19 related deaths. As of yesterday, we have tested a total of 534 individuals. Our County has stayed in the containment phase and does not have community transmission.

Additionally, from the outset of this health emergency the County has partnered with our neighboring counties of Mariposa, Madera, Yosemite National Park and the Stanislaus National Forest. This Yosemite Gateway multi-agency coordination team has worked collaboratively to implement a plan for the various phases of this emergency including containment, mitigation, surge and recovery. We have also

worked with partners at all levels within our County including federal agencies, tribes, schools, local businesses, the city, etc. All of this is done to ensure we are properly implementing the State's Orders, but also planning for an eventual reopening

We can meet the six criteria you have outlined for relaxing of the stay-at-home order:

1. Testing, contact tracing, and other containment capacity is in place;
2. Vulnerable populations should continue to shelter in place at home;
3. We have developed a surge plan and an alternative care site, should they be necessary;
4. We request that any therapeutic medications be made available to our county providers through the manufacturers' expanded access program;
5. Our local Health Officer has established a committee of local stakeholders to work on social distancing measures within businesses, school, and other local institutions; and
6. We plan to apply appropriate containment and mitigation measures if a spike in cases occurs.

Tuolumne County would like to move into a hybrid of stage two and three as outlined by Dr. Angell and relax the stay-at-home order no later than May 8, 2020. We wholeheartedly agree with your statement that "localism is determinism." As a small rural County, we believe we have the ability to actively manage the risk of the disease to protect our residents and visitors. This is evidenced by the fact Tuolumne County does not have community transmission.

Our request is that local businesses outlined in both Stage 2 and 3 be allowed to reopen to the public. We will work with our local businesses to ensure that those higher risk activities have been addressed with appropriate mitigation measures to ensure the safety of all. Allowing us this head start will better prepare us for the eventual lifting of the stay-at-home order. As you know, we are a County that hosts many visitors to our area given that we are a gateway to Yosemite National Park and home of the Stanislaus National Forest, along with several other attractive tourist destinations. Reopening our local businesses now will allow them time to prepare for an eventual influx of visitors, and it will allow the County to ensure the local businesses have instituted necessary mitigation measures.

We understand the dire financial circumstances many of our local businesses face both those operating year-round and those operating seasonally as a result of being closed. The County's local seasonal tourism businesses tell us if they are not able to reopen by Memorial Day weekend they will not financially recover. We recognize many other jurisdictions have taken the matter into their own hands by allowing non-essential activities to reopen. Our rural community does not face some of the same restraints that our more populated neighbors face, for instance our geographic nature allows individuals to engage in recreational activity without worry of congregation. Our small business owners are able to institute mitigation measures to ensure their staff and customers are safe.

As you know, Tuolumne County has a proven track record of being a leader in the State when it comes to creatively addressing emergencies. Our County proudly lead the State in creating a drought program. We also lead the State in creating a tree mortality program. Both programs were successful because we worked closely with the State and brought together local partners to meet the community's needs. We would like to be the leader in the State when it comes to properly reopening our businesses. We would approach the reopening with the same innovation and collaboration as we have previously done. We know we can be successful.

Once again, we want to thank you for your proactive approach to mitigating the risk of the coronavirus. More specifically, we appreciate your messaging about the importance of minimizing travel and to stay within one's own community.

We request your consideration of allowing rural jurisdictions such as ours, with little or no community transmission, the ability to immediately re-open businesses and the community at large.

Sincerely,



Sherri Brennan, Chair
Office of Emergency Services-Director

cc: California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)
National Association of Counties (NACO)

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

ALICIA L. JAMAR
Clark of the Board

By: 