



May 20, 2020

Governor Jared Polis
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Via Email: governorpolis@state.co.us

Dear Governor Polis:

Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC) counts among its membership eight (8) Colorado counties and twenty (20) municipalities in Northwest Colorado. Our members have raised substantial concerns regarding the state's management of the COVID-19 pandemic and wish to share those concerns with you.

First, our members recognize that in the early days of the virus impacting the country and ultimately, Colorado, we did not know how our communities would be affected. We do appreciate actions taken to keep people safe. Our concerns revolve around the continued "lock-down" of our economies even now that we have a better understanding of the effects this virus is having in our communities. Keeping the entire state in an economic vise is not prudent nor in the best interest of our citizens. These lock down orders take a serious toll on local resources in terms of law enforcement, administration, etc. with no mechanism available to recover those costs. The orders are viewed by many of our communities as very heavy handed when one realizes that cases of infection in this region are quite low.

Every community has monitored, researched, and verified the impact of the virus locally. Communities in the region have communicated and continue to communicate about effective management techniques to provide a safe environment with the larger, regional community. That is more than can be said for the higher levels of the state administration. Edicts from the Governor's office eviscerate local control efforts and leave communities with few cases of the virus to languish economically.

Rural economies, like those within our region, will be the last to recover from an economic impact such as the stay at home requirements levied by the state. Rural areas also have access to fewer resources such as testing and epidemiology services. After the first few weeks of the isolation, it was rather obvious what the impacts would be in many of our communities yet local governments were left powerless to help local businesses and citizens get back to work for their financial and mental wellbeing.

While our communities are actively preparing and requesting variances from the now, safer at home, requirement it is a cumbersome burden for our smaller communities. It cannot be any less

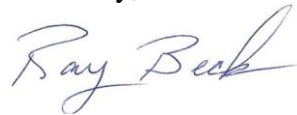
cumbersome for the state departments charged with reviewing and authorizing variances across all 64 counties.

Our members believe that guidance based on actual case count and new cases over a period of time that would allow local governments to issue their own guidance to communities, businesses and citizens is a more sensible and efficient management tool.

Our local governments have had more interaction with the White House than we have our own state government. AGNC members are the elected officials in our communities. As such, they know what is happening in the community and should be able to act in the best interest of their citizens without being required to stand by a statewide edict issued by officials that are not familiar with the communities our members serve. At the very least, our members would expect that state officials engage in greater communication with local governments across the entire state to implement actions that make sense across all regions.

Colorado state officials do not want their ability to do what is best for the state usurped by the Federal Government. To that end, county and municipal governments do not want their authority usurped by the State. Our members respectfully request that you let them do their jobs and make decisions regarding their local management of the COVID-19 virus based on their community's needs. AGNC members request that all requested waivers submitted by NW Colorado governments be granted expeditiously and that the state develop guidelines for local governments to move forward with re-opening their economies without the need for submitted waiver requests.

Sincerely,



Ray Beck
AGNC Chairman
Moffat County Commissioner

Copies to:

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, Director CDPHE, via email: jillhunsakerryan@state.co.us
Western Colorado Legislators