



Roger A. Bergman
Chairperson

Matthew R. Fenske
Vice-Chairperson

Ottawa County

Board of Commissioners

January 21, 2021

Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor
State of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Re: Status Report and Suggestions on COVID-19 From Ottawa County

Dear Governor Whitmer:

As spokesperson for Ottawa County, this is a follow-up to our April 15, 2020 and May 26, 2020 letters and a repeat of our constructive input as to the next steps that we believe need to be taken in Ottawa County as we move forward with our State's COVID 19 response.

Despite the recent surge, our new COVID 19 cases, positivity rate and ICU bed usage are stable, and we think it is time to open up restaurants again to the safe spread prevention practices that they were using before the surge. We know your Administration is planning for such a restoration on February 1, 2021. We would request earlier consideration and, if not, we plead that you hold your resolve to allow a reopening no later than the February 1, 2021 date and allow them to remain open through the control of the pandemic through increased vaccination. Frankly, our restaurant industry is "at the end of its rope." For most restaurants, their financing has been stretched to or beyond the breaking point and they simply will be unable to keep their staffs, who are bearing a disproportionate share of the community COVID 19 economic burden, if they don't open as soon as possible. As importantly, in our County, restaurants do not appear to be a significant contributor to the spread. In fact, meals at home among friends and extended family—the alternatives to restaurants, would appear much more likely to cause spread.

As we have said before, we offer this letter, not as criticism or complaint, but rather in the spirit of our partnership with you.

Very truly yours,

Roger A. Bergman, Chairperson
Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

cc: MDHHS Director Robert Gordon
cc: Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

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