



Jefferson County

Office of the Mayor

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County Mayor

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To the Citizens of Jefferson County,

Last week, Governor Bill Lee delegated the decision of whether or not to mandate face coverings in 89 counties to the mayors of the respective counties. Mandating citizens to wear face coverings is an emotional issue and I have heard the passionate debates from both sides of this issue. There is the opinion of those that think government is over stepping its authority, if it mandates face coverings and there are others who think it is the role of government to protect its citizens from the COVID -19 pandemic by mandating face coverings. There is not a consensus.

The real question before us is "how do we stop the spread of this virus and keep our people safe?" One option is to mandate facial coverings in public places, but is it practical? It really would be impossible to enforce this mandate. We have laws in place now to protect us. Yet, there are members of society who simply choose to ignore public safety laws i.e. texting and driving.

As county mayor, I will not issue an order that requires the use of facial coverings in public places. I do strongly encourage all people to consider protecting those people around us. There are ways we can help to stop the spread of this virus even without a face covering mandate. We can follow the guidelines already in place. We can take the Governors Pledge.

We should continue to wash our hands frequently, practice social distancing, stay home when sick, wear masks when in public, avoid going to places where vulnerable populations reside. Together we can make a difference and help slow the spread of this virus. Consider shopping at locations that utilize safe practices. Encourage retailers to establish times designated for only shoppers who are wearing facial coverings. If you shop at a retailer that is following safe practices, let others know.

We all share the same concerns for our safety and the safety of our family, friends, and neighbors. Jefferson County will persevere through this challenge as we have demonstrated through our history.

Respectfully,

Mark Potts, Mayor of Jefferson County