



Petersburg Medical Center

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Dear Mayor and Assembly Members,

We are writing as representative of the Petersburg Medical Center (PMC) Incident Command Team for the COVID-19 crisis. We have been heartened greatly by the response of Petersburg Borough in response to the COVID-19 crisis. We believe that it is through the combined work of many individuals and organizations in Petersburg that we can say we currently have zero active cases of COVID-19 in our community and continue to flatten the curve.

Governor Dunleavy's COVID-19 Health Mandates have been put in place to slow the spread of the virus and prevent our health care system from being overwhelmed. However, in conjunction with the Borough's Emergency Operations, PMC has great concerns of the upcoming seasonal workforce to Petersburg. The current state mandate on essential workers does not allow the Borough to enact stricter ordinances on a workforce flying into Petersburg. We are not alone in this concern, Sitka recently passed an ordinance with tighter restriction on seasonal workers. Wrangell attempted to provide stricter controls under the same concerns only to be overridden by the state, due to the population restrictions.

We are very concerned that the Borough of Petersburg cannot enforce a stricter mandate to control the large influx of an outside workforce into our community or enforce businesses to submit *and* follow a detailed plan how that business will operate safely during the COVID19 pandemic.

Petersburg is particularly vulnerable as a small rural community with limited healthcare resources. It is not medically realistic to prevent COVID-19 from coming to the community and we are at considerable risk of a catastrophic spread of COVID-19. Even in our own healthcare facility we have taken drastic measures of prevention, isolation of patients, quarantining, distancing, worker pathway restrictions and personal protective equipment yet Healthcare Workers are still the most at risk for exposure to COVID19. It is difficult to understand how a seasonal business can manage a large group workforce to mitigate the arrival and spread of COVID19.

While the action plans required of the local industry may appear to mitigate risk of this virus from an economic standpoint, the reality is without adequate high efficacy rapid testing, a vaccination and improved treatment protocols for COVID19 this is not acceptable risk from a medical standpoint. A single non-isolated COVID19 virus can be asymptomatic and has an exponential risk to spread in the community of Petersburg with catastrophic consequences.

Thank you for taking this into consideration,

Phil Hofstetter, CEO/Incident Commander
Petersburg Medical Center

Dr. Jennifer Hyer, Chief of Staff/Medical Specialist
Petersburg Medical Center