

Debra Thompson

From: jbdavies@kpunet.net
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 1:19 AM
To: 'Crum, Adam R (HSS)'; BoroughAssembly@juneau.org; wwmas@muni.org; mayor@muni.org; cityclerk@fairbanks.us; council@fairbanks.us; assembly@cityofsitka.org; assembly.departmentheads@cityofsitka.org; Assembly; clerk@wrangell.com; administrator@craigak.com; cityclerk@craigak.com; edevries@palmerak.org; nalley@palmerak.org; mayor@city.kodiak.ak.us; bhammond@nomealaska.org; lonnie.mckechnie@matsugov.us; clerk@cityofseward.net; cityclerk@kenai.city; spierce@valdezak.gov; council@soldotna.org; clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov
Cc: 'Zink, Anne B (HSS)'; 'Stevens, Ben A (GOV)'; 'Stedman, Bert K (LEG)'; ortiz4akhouse@gmail.com; 'Diane Liljegren'; kims@ktn-ak.us; Jack and Bev Davies
Subject: RE: Covid Resolution sent to Governor Dunleavy asking for a state quarantine mandate

Commissioner Crum,

Thank you very much for responding to my email.

We have studied the new travel mandates that are effective August 11, 2020 and it is our opinion they are going in the right direction but are not enough.

We have multiple concerns about the updated Mandate #10.

1. Ketchikan's municipal attorney argues that he and other municipal attorneys believe that boroughs and cities on the road or marine highway system don't have the legal authority to mandate travel restrictions exceeding what the state mandates. Hence the resolution asking Governor Dunleavy to change to a 14 day travel quarantine which would protect the whole state.

2. With over 5 million confirmed Covid-19 cases and over 163,000 deaths in the US and surging numbers in Alaska it is reasonable for Alaska to protect itself with a quarantine requirement. In British Columbia, as required in all of Canada, all travelers (residents or not) are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival from any international destination, the US included. Canadian regulations require 14 day quarantine with no symptoms or 14 day isolation with symptoms.

Mandate 10 allows a potentially infected traveler, until they obtain a second test at the end of the 14 day incubation period, to wander in our communities putting us at risk even though that person isn't allowed in certain places such as restaurants, bars, gyms, etc.

Will the traveler be given a printed list of the numerous restrictions?

How will enforcement occur? Will there be penalties for non-compliance?

3. Ketchikan is geographically isolated despite being served by ferries and one jet airport. There is one small critical access hospital that serves Ketchikan, Metlakatla on Annette Island (which has a 14 day quarantine program) and numerous communities on Prince of Wales Island (no quarantine programs). If Ketchikan or the other communities it serves have Covid outbreaks, our small hospital would be unable to manage a large number of Covid patients. A state mandate with the 14 day quarantine for interstate and intrastate travel would help protect our small medical facility from being overwhelmed.

4. The “strict social distancing” requirement in the new mandate is too complicated for the average traveler to understand and comply with. The co-author of this resolution, Dr. Diane Liljegren MD states, “I am a board certified family medicine physician, Alaska license 2793. The Covid health mandate 10 scheduled to begin August 11 is dense in detail. I had to read it twice before I was sure I understood it. I think it is likely that people without a college education and a health care background will not understand it fully, which in turn will limit compliance.”

A simple 14 day quarantine where the traveler is known to be in one place is easier to understand, comply with and monitor.

Quarantine is more easily enforceable than social distancing with complicated rules. People could be hired to door knock to monitor compliance. For example, in Victoria, Australia 3000 door knocks found 800 people were not at home.

5. Many people are disinclined to follow state health mandates due to misunderstanding of the severity of the pandemic. We can attest from reading several people’s comments in social media and public comment that many people are uninformed about the seriousness and contagiousness of Covid-19. Comments such as denial there is a pandemic and it’s all an overreaction are common. Questions about even the need for testing abound. Last night an Anchorage resident wrote in social media that her husband recently tested positive and they were both under 14 day quarantine. She was upset and disbelieving of the need for this, likening Covid to the flu. So far they have no symptoms with a week to go. However, she stated, “Lots of walks/runs, purging old stuff and donating it and kicking my husband out for long motorcycle rides.” They are both going in the car to pick up their groceries curbside. When I questioned her she said they were allowed out for exercise and groceries.

Is that true? What are the rules for quarantine/isolation for Covid positive people?

Are people hired to monitor/track infected individuals or arriving travelers for compliance?

What are the penalties for non-compliance?

6. We are concerned about the large number of travelers to Alaska who do not get Covid testing on entry to the state. Testing out of state travelers is an excellent approach that we absolutely agree with, but data indicates that currently only 52% of travelers get tested before entering Alaska, which means 48% of travelers currently don’t get tested. The fact is that it can be difficult for travelers to obtain tests in some areas down south. We agree with you that the second test at the end of the 14 day incubation period is necessary, especially due to the occurrence of asymptomatic people. The CDC states that the incubation period for Covid is up to 14 days so someone could test positive at any time in that 14 day period.

How many people get the second test and when? Are prepaid vouchers left unused?

Is there a plan to effectively trace travelers until their second test result is back?

7. The new mandate doesn’t address intrastate travel other than allowing intrastate traveler airport testing effective August 11, 2020. However, there are only 5 airport testing sites in the whole state, is that correct? With 3,181 active Covid cases in over 62 Alaskan communities we need to mandate intrastate travel testing and quarantine the same as interstate/international travel until we can limit active cases in the state to those travelers already in quarantine.

Which Alaskan airports have airport testing sites?

What happens at isolated communities like Wrangell and Petersburg that we believe don’t have airport testing sites?

Why isn’t Alaska mandating testing, with a second test at the end of the 14 day incubation period, and eventually quarantine for intrastate travel?

We urge simple 14 day quarantine for all travel, interstate, international and intrastate, be mandated by the state. In the model already previously discussed there are exemptions for required medical travel and essential workers. Alaska could use the model as a template to customize but please don't remove the basic 14 day quarantine and please add enforcement and penalties for non-compliance with monitoring as they do in other areas where this is working to protect their citizens.

We brought this proposal forward to highlight a proven model that is extremely successful in creating a Covid-free environment thanks to the safety net at the borders. The people are happy living as normally as possible with no mask mandates, no longer needing any intrastate travel restrictions and their schools, workplaces and recreational activities are all open safely.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bev Davies 907-225-2747/907-617-7207

Dr. Diane Liljegren 907-225-6808/907-821-7006

8/08/20	Western Australia (pop. 2.6 million)	Alaska (pop. 745,000)	Anchorage (pop. 288,000)	Juneau (pop. 31,974)
New cases	0	100 (98r+ 2n)	59 (59r+0n)	6 (6r+0n)
Active cases	4	3178 (2594r+ 584n)	1590 (1515r+75n)	123 (63r+60n)
Recovered	629	1269 (1091r+178n)	686 (630r+56n)	55 (43r+12n)
In Hospitals	0	41 (ICU on vent 4)	Unknown	Unknown
Deaths	9	26*	14*	1*
Total cases	642	4473 (3711r+762n)	2290 (2159r+131n)	179 (107r+72n)

*Alaska residents only

From: Crum, Adam R (HSS) [mailto:adam.crum@alaska.gov]

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 10:04 AM

To: jbdavies@kpunet.net; BoroughAssembly@juneau.org; wwmas@muni.org; mayor@muni.org; cityclerk@fairbanks.us; council@fairbanks.us; assembly@cityofsitka.org; assembly.departmentheads@cityofsitka.org; assembly@petersburgak.gov; clerk@wrangell.com; administrator@craigak.com; cityclerk@craigak.com; edevries@palmerak.org; nalley@palmerak.org; mayor@city.kodiak.ak.us; bhammond@nomealaska.org; lonnie.mckechnie@matsugov.us; clerk@cityofseward.net; cityclerk@kenai.city; spierce@valdezak.gov; council@soldotna.org; clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov

Cc: Zink, Anne B (HSS); Stevens, Ben A (GOV); Stedman, Bert K (LEG); Rep.Dan.Ortiz@akleg.com; Diane Liljegren; kims@ktn-ak.us

Subject: RE: Covid Resolution sent to Governor Dunleavy asking for a state quarantine mandate

Thank you so much for your email and your proactive approach and containing COVID in Ketchikan. As you mention, keeping COVID out is an important tool and strategy, especially in communities like Ketchikan and as you mention a single test approach will miss many cases. This is the reason in our most recent travel updates we tried to build on lessons learned and make the new travel guidelines even more protective. Here a few highlights.

1. By requiring a test 72 hr before entering and not offering a test without payment for non-residents, we hope to have more people get tested before they come. Currently, 52% of travelers do get tested before entering, but we hope to increase this.
2. The new travel portal is designed to encourage people to think about lodging, transportation and other logistics before they get here. This approach has worked well in British Colombia and we are building on it
3. We did not remove the second test – but in fact tried to make the language more clear about the importance on minimizing interaction for a full 14 day period and a test at the end is the only way this can be shortened. We

are happy to revisit this language, but the goal was to make it more clear and to really push for that full 14 day incubation period where people who travel are not around others. We also support this second.

4. The Ketchikan EOC and community is welcome to use CARES funds like Bethel for food and lodging to support travelers. As mentioned, travelers now have to detail their whole plan for the 14 days to minimize that interaction.

ADAM CRUM | Commissioner
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From: jbdavies@kpunet.net [mailto:jbdavies@kpunet.net]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 7:43 PM
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Cc: Zink, Anne B (HSS) <anne.zink@alaska.gov>; Stevens, Ben A (GOV) <ben.stevens@alaska.gov>; Crum, Adam R (HSS) <adam.crum@alaska.gov>; Stedman, Bert K (LEG) <senator.bert.stedman@akleg.gov>; Rep.Dan.Ortiz@akleg.com; Diane Liljegren <dliljmit@kpunet.net>; kims@ktn-ak.us; Jack and Bev Davies <jbdavies@kpunet.net>
Subject: Covid Resolution sent to Governor Dunleavy asking for a state quarantine mandate

I am writing this email to inform other Alaskan communities that last night the Ketchikan City Council voted to send Governor Dunleavy a request to mandate 14 day quarantine with appropriate testing for all arriving interstate and intrastate travelers in Alaska.

Even the new state mandates effective August 11, 2020 are still a swiss cheese approach. Travelers are asked to "practice social distancing" while they await test results. There is a complicated definition for social distancing, allowing the traveler to be active in the community, which no one will read and absolutely no one will enforce. One negative test is not enough. When the viral load is low a false negative will result plus they have at least 72 hours to get infected after being swabbed, with their travel time being quite high risk. We can't afford to allow even one infected person to potentially spread it everywhere in our communities. Instead of trying to flatten the curve Western Australia (WA) has now gone over 100 days with no COVID-19 cases in their general population, the only active cases are travelers already in quarantine. Please see the attached Ketchikan Daily News article explaining how they did it. Also see the Premier, Mark McGowan's Official Facebook page for an easy reference with links to the government website for further details. The resolution refers to the high success this approach is in the state of Western Australia where today they only have 6 active cases, travelers identified already in quarantine, compared to Alaska's total of 3025 active cases. The 14 day quarantine is a proven method in Western Australia and New Zealand where they practice strict enforcement, and now a few US states are implementing it and some Alaskan communities.

This is the link for the Western Australia Government COVID-19 response which includes 14 day quarantine (a model that Alaska could adapt to suit):

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus>

This is the link for the New York Travel Advisory which includes New Jersey and Connecticut showing Alaska as one of the 35 restricted states requiring Alaskans to 14 day quarantine upon arrival in NY, NJ, CT. No mention of a negative test as an option.

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

As of 2 days ago, New York City has checkpoints at all the entry points to monitor arriving travelers for the 14 day quarantine:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/08/05/899337278/nyc-setting-up-quarantine-checkpoints-for-travelers-from-covid-19-hotspots>

Metlakatla also has a 14 day quarantine with testing required to protect themselves from COVID-19, relevant to the area visited. They also have trackers paid for from the CARES Funds to monitor people arriving and departing the island at the ferry, planes, and the main breakwaters. They have smaller boat launches blocked off with large boulders.

<http://www.metlakatla.com/blogs/mic-pandemic-travel-mitigation-re-opening-plan/>

Bethel is offering to pay travelers accommodation, meals, transport to/from the airport and testing for travelers to quarantine in hotels during their layover.

In 1918 Shishmaref created a guarded blockade at its entry point a distance from town and only allowed people to come within hailing distance. This stopped the spread of the deadly Spanish Flu into their community and all those north of them.

Two days ago, a small cruise ship had to return to Juneau due to COVID-19 on board.

Two days ago, two people returning from Metlakatla from medical in Anchorage had to stay in Juneau due to the escort testing positive for the virus.

Since the communities of Ketchikan, Metlakatla and Prince of Wales all share the Ketchikan airport and hospital it would make sense for those areas to be in cooperation with each other.

With Ketchikan schools planning on opening at full capacity soon, unlike Juneau and Anchorage with distance-learning, it is imperative we stop hoping we stay lucky and get proactive in doing something to protect ourselves. The 14 day quarantine of all travelers has been proven to do that. As mentioned previously, Western Australia has celebrated 100+ days with no cases in their general population, only those travelers in the 14 day quarantine (in self-quarantine in an appropriate premises or in a hotel).

Ketchikan wouldn't need to be spending \$2.5 million on testing because with COVID-19 eliminated from our community the need for testing everyone, often, would be less. We wouldn't be constantly fearing an outbreak, or superspreader event, that could overwhelm our very limited resources and we wouldn't be risking crippling shutdowns to our economy, as Anchorage is facing right now.

Please remember the incubation period for COVID-19 is up to 14 days so one negative test isn't enough. The traveler could get tested in the first few days of exposure and not have a high enough viral load to test positive plus there is that 72 hours to get exposed before arrival in Ketchikan. A second negative test in that 14 days with quarantine is needed. The sooner an arriving traveler in quarantine is tested the sooner contact tracing can begin if they test positive and the quarantine reduces the risk of cheaters. Ketchikan doesn't have the authority to impose travel restriction as per the municipal attorney so a travel mandate from the state is needed.

Trying to flatten the curve isn't working but 14 day quarantine with strict enforcement has been proven to work. Please pass a similar resolution, to go to Governor Dunleavy, in your communities so Ketchikan and others lacking the authority to enact a quarantine travel mandate can get protected from this debilitating virus. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bev Davies
Ketchikan

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