

Debra Thompson

From: Tim Shumway <timshumway1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2021 7:45 AM
To: Assembly
Subject: Appeal For Continued Vigilance

To the Petersburg Borough Assembly,

I am writing to you this morning from my infant son's bedside at Randall Children's Hospital in Portland, Oregon, where two days ago he underwent open-heart surgery. As a father, there is nothing in the world more important to me than the well-being of my children, and that is what has led me to reach out to you today. I would like to thank you for thoughtfully confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, and to implore you to remain vigilant through a continued masking mandate.

Our community has been fortunate that the toll of this pandemic has not been higher locally. By and large, our businesses and schools have remained open, those who are struggling have received support, and the human cost has been low. However, that does not mean that the risks are low. An infection would be life-threatening for my son, yet I spend my working days as a teacher interacting with dozens of students. I take the precautions I can, but I cannot isolate to protect my son, and so I must rely on others to be responsible and to respect his life. Observing the behaviors of too many around me, I cannot say that I am confident in the response of our community as a whole. Each day that I (and my day-care aged son) do not bring the virus home to my vulnerable infant, I attribute it to luck.

Despite rampant disinformation, I know that you are all aware that the science on this issue isn't in question. From my perspective, the decisions you have to make at the borough assembly level are not about what the best ways are to protect the community. You know what *should* be done - that guidance has been provided by healthcare professionals. I believe that the decisions that you have to make are, rather, questions of leadership. Real leadership is the willingness and strength to do what is right even in the face of resistance - even (perhaps especially) when people are upset. That is what each of you signed up for when you ran for elected office. Since masking reduces the spread of this virus, we need clear, unambiguous, unanimous leadership from the assembly on this issue regardless of politics or popularity.

Please, have the courage to continue to do what is right, and please do not let a vocal minority in our town endanger the lives of our most vulnerable residents, my son included.

Respectfully,
Tim Shumway