

Debra Thompson

From: Kathy Bracken <seanana49@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Assembly; Stephen Giesbrecht; Emergency Operations Center; Karl Hagerman
Subject: Public Mask Mandate

Members of the Petersburg Assembly,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my opinion on the Public Mask Mandate.

Thank you to the EOC team—including the PMC staff— because in a very large part, this team—who has kept their eyes on the ball of the ever-evolving Covid 19 virus—is responsible for keeping our community one of the safest communities in the country.

Again, we need to address the mask mandate. I guess we need to do this every once in a while to remind everyone how important it is and to keep us on our toes. I am in support of wearing a mask to help prevent the spread of Covid 19.

As new coronavirus variants continue to spread from other countries and parts of our own country, we are learning more every day about how important it is to protect ourselves from the mutations, which have been identified in Anchorage and in Washington. Commonly, they have been found to be more contagious than the original virus. It's very important that the original virus or the variants don't spread and enter our systems, because over time that's how they will continue to mutate. Wearing good masks in an appropriate manner has been shown to be one of the best ways to prevent that spread. In fact, because of this variant spread, the CDC is recommending either wearing stronger masks or doubling your masks.

We've been so excited and placed much hope in the vaccines. Petersburg is well on its way to having over a third of the population immunized. That is truly wonderful! Even so, there's little evidence at the present time that receiving the vaccine prevents someone from transmitting the virus to other people. Even vaccinated, though you may not become seriously ill, you could be a carrier. Research is ongoing.

So at a time when variants are entering our population, and we are still learning whether vaccines prevent spread; as people in our community continue to travel internationally, domestically, and intrastate, and because keeping our schools and businesses open is a priority, **let's continue to take every precaution to continue to keep our community healthy.**

Now's not the time to remove or ease up on a mask mandate. In fact, now's the time to double down and continue this and other mandates.

Respectfully,
Kathy Bracken