

To whom it may concern;

In the essence of time and with the belief that this letter may not be read if too long, I'd like to ask several questions and make a few statements. First and foremost, when did our city officials including the Mayor **"Abandon the Science"**? It's common knowledge that social distancing while outdoors does not contribute to the spread of Covid-19 yet you mandated facial coverings while outdoors with the threat of prosecution. There's no science to support that and that alone tells me your **"No Longer Following the Science"**. You cannot and should not penalize all because some decided not wear a facial covering. **PUNISHING ALL** because of a few is a horrible way to lead and this is in part why there's been such a resistance to your objectives here in Key West. You arrested a firefighter and other tourists...shame on you. Is this the message you want to send out to the rest of the country?

Why do our public leaders and the Mayor not take into consideration other expert opinions on lock downs, curfews and mandatory facial coverings? Some experts have strongly urged against these methods for thwarting the spread of the virus. When will you concede and admit your policies are failing and hurting our tiny island?

Why do city officials and the Mayor rarely tell its citizens how to properly handle and clean the masks you force them to wear? If you're in a grocery store and pushing a cart that many have handled only to turn around and touch your mask to adjust it, there's a possibility you could be transmitting the virus on to that facial covering and that **could actually be contributing to the spread of the virus not preventing it.**

More importantly, why are we not looking at other states who have had very strict lock downs, curfews and mandatory facial coverings like CA, MI, NY and other similar states? They all are doing horrible. This is of the utmost importance because it's real time with real results. Unfortunately it's not working so why would the Mayor and our city officials wish to follow failed states? This makes no sense.

Has our city officials and the Mayor taken in to account the **"Other Side of the Pandemic"**? And what I mean by that is the **consequences of these lock downs, curfews and failed mask mandates**. Look at the results or the effects of businesses being forced to shut down. Employees can't work. Businesses can't generate revenues. Tax dollars for the city are lost. There's proven results for these failures, which have led to more crime, more poverty, more suicide, more child abuse, domestic violence, murder and so forth. Is this the direction the Mayor and our city officials want for our small community? Why don't you pivot? Why do you continue to stand idle why so many businesses some that have been here for years have permanently closed? People are suffering because of your decisions. It's shameful. You Mayor and our city officials did this to our community. You could have concentrated your efforts on those at most risk but you didn't. Instead you're failing a large segment of our population here and when the next voting cycle comes, the people will surely vote all of you out.

It's your responsibility Mayor to govern fairly for all and when you abandoned that, **I stopped supporting you**. Be responsible not scared. Be equitable and balance both sides of this pandemic. Focus your efforts on the vulnerable. Provide them the support and assistance that's needed to keep them safe. It's common knowledge that if a healthy person is exposed to Covid, they will recover. Some may not even show signs. Those **healthy individuals should be allowed to work** without restrictions to earn a living for their families. And that's not a privilege... **it's our right!**

Our nation has watched other public leaders like Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Mayor Lightfoot of Chicago get haircuts without a mask while no one else in their district could. Governor Newsom of CA who's handled this pandemic poorly gets caught dining out with friends and supporters while everyone else is asked to stay home. Chuck Schumer dances in the street without a mask after the election. The list of violators is extensive so we must ask ourselves, are

they really scared of the virus if they are willing to break their own rules? What kind of message does that send to the people? And here we are, locking down Key West. Implementing curfews that are destroying businesses and lives and the Mayor and city officials turn a blind eye to them. It's disgraceful. You work for the people not just some of the people.

And lastly it's our right to decide what's best for our own health not the government. If person feels they need to wear a mask, then so be it. If your saying masks work, then those who wear them are protected. I'm not opposed to that. I encourage it but healthy people shouldn't be forced to wear one. The vulnerable should be asked to stay home. They should be the one's wearing the facial coverings when they must leave their homes. The rest of us will follow CDC protocols. Wash our hands often. Cover our mouths when we sneeze or cough. Maintain social distancing when others are around. And go back to work.

And if any public official would like to speak to me, I'm available. You can reach me at 813-943-9810. Thank you and I wish everyone a healthy new year.

Sincerely,

Thomas Etheridge
Resident of Key West