



THE HONORABLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN ADOPTS
THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS, the Berrien County Board of Commissioners recognizes the heroic efforts of our front-line workers and first responders and applauds the citizens and businesses who have diligently adhered to mitigation measures; and

WHEREAS, the Berrien County Board of Commissioners appreciates the need for appropriate executive and epidemic orders and policies to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus and promote public safety, while also protecting local and state economic interests; and

WHEREAS, Berrien County's cases and positivity rates continue to decline, hospital capacity continues to improve, and the number of citizens who have been vaccinated to protect themselves from the virus, increases daily; and

WHEREAS, the Berrien County Board of Commissioners addressed the need to regionalize the response to COVID-19 in a letter to Governor Whitmer in April of 2020, recognizing that what is necessary for some areas of our state may not be necessary in Southwest Michigan; and

WHEREAS, those of us in border counties have seen a magnified effect on our economy due to our citizens being able to drive a short distance to Indiana, where the restrictions are less; and

WHEREAS, the proximity to Indiana has particularly impacted our local restaurant industry which is already struggling to recover from another dine-in closure order, followed by a curfew and 25% capacity restriction that lacks financial viability for most area establishes; and

WHEREAS, while some local businesses may have received some governmental financial assistance it was not enough to offset the losses of revenue due to closures and restrictions, thus many local businesses have been forced to close permanently due to the irreparable economic harm they have experienced throughout this past year and many more will follow if the state does not adopt a new approach to mitigation policies; and

WHEREAS, Berrien County has seen a consistent downward trend in the numbers affected by COVID-19, it is now time for all of our businesses, including but not limited to restaurants and banquet facilities, to remain open in accordance with CDC guidelines with industry-specific procedures and protocols aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19 in place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners calls upon the Governor to implement a new, regional approach to mitigation that values local input; takes cases, vaccinations, seasonality, and regional differences into consideration; and sets clear benchmarks for the easing of restrictions on businesses for the public to follow.

Respectfully,
Berrien County Board of Commissioners

R. McKinley Elliott

Jim Curran

Julie Wuerfel

Ezra A. Scott

David Vollrath

Michael J. Majerek

Don Meeks

Teri Sue Freehling

Robert P. Harrison

Mamie L. Yarbrough

Jon Hinkelman

Rayonte D. Bell