

Stacey Wathen, Current Resident
7155 Annapolis Woods Rd
LaPlata, MD 20646

December 3, 2021

County Commissioners of Charles County
200 Baltimore Street
La Plata, MD 20646

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to voice my opposition to requiring face coverings to reduce the spread of COVID-19. I have two very simple questions. Why are we doing this? And what are the unintended consequences of doing so?

Why

Initially we were told it was to protect others. We complied. I think everyone can agree in the beginning we were unsure of the dangers and wanted to protect those most vulnerable. As time marched on and more data became available, thankfully it is not as deadly as initially estimated. The estimated survival rate for most people between age 0-69 is 99.41% for children is it 99.9973%. Governor Hogan recently announced that 88% of adults and 99.9% of seniors are vaccinated. There are several therapeutics readily available. The vast majority of the public is overwhelmingly safe. So why are we still behaving as if this is the plague?

We know face covering mandates are ineffective at preventing the spread of COVID-19. There are studies proving so, but if you only look with your own eyes the anecdotal evidence is overwhelming at this point. There is no discernible difference in case rates between areas who have mandates and those who don't. So, I ask again why are we doing this?

Unintended Consequences

It's just a mask, right? I think most people felt this way in the beginning. It's just a mask, do it for granny. After living in a world of masked faces for almost two years, I can say with complete confidence. It's not just a mask. In the beginning I viewed the non-compliant as a bunch of "Karens" who just enjoy defiance. Boy were they right.

This point is difficult to articulate because it is impossible to quantify. The only thing I can do is ask this simple question. Don't you miss seeing a stranger's smile? The little kid in the grocery line who shyly giggles at you. The man who holds the door at the gas station. The server who brings your meal. I am done being a faceless drone. **No thank you, I'd rather take the 0.33% of dying from COVID-19 than remove one more ounce of our collective humanity.**

Sincerely,

