

April 21, 2020

Escambia County Commission

Jeff Bergosh, County Commissioner District 1
Doug Underhill, County Commissioner District 2
Lumon May, County Commissioner District 3
Robert Bender, County Commissioner District 4
Steven Barry, County Commissioner District 5

Dear Commissioners,

On March 19, 2020, we submitted a joint letter to the members of the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners stating our unified support for measures that would encourage social distancing and limit the ability for people to congregate for a period of two weeks. We expressed our position at that particular point in time because we believed such measures would "flatten the curve" of the spread of the COVID-19 virus and minimize loss of life in our community. We also wanted to allow time to establish and expand COVID-19 testing capabilities and contact tracing efforts, acquire additional personal protective equipment, and move closer to identifying effective anti-viral treatment regimens to reduce mortality associated with this disease. On the date of that letter, our community had a total of 4 confirmed COVID-19 cases with one fatality.

Since the date of our letter and as of April 20, 2020, we collectively have tested a total of 7,326 people throughout Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties in the inpatient, ambulatory, and mobile testing efforts. This comprehensive testing has resulted in a total number of 367 citizens testing positive. When compared to other communities in the state and nation, our community has deployed a comprehensive testing infrastructure that we believe has contributed to flattening the curve. We have also rapidly deployed inpatient and outpatient care planning, treatment regimens, surge capacity plans, and efforts to protect the safety and health of first responders and health care providers.

As you know, the Federal Government issued social distancing guidelines on March 16, initially for a 15-day period, and subsequently extended those directives through April 30. The State of Florida issued executive orders beginning with the March 1 order directing the Florida Department of Health to issue a Public Health Emergency, the March 9 order declaring a state of emergency as a result of COVID-19, and the March 23 and March 27 orders which required individuals visiting Florida from areas with significant community spread to self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival. The Governor's March 24 order resulted in the limiting of all social and recreational gatherings to less than 10 people and urged telecommuting when possible. The April 1 "Safer at Home" order instructed Floridians to limit their movements and personal interactions outside of their home to only those necessary to obtain or provide essential services or conduct essential activities.

Having reviewed national, state, and regional data, it is clear that the layering of measures enacted at all levels of government have proven to be effective in achieving the desired outcomes. Looking back over this past month, we are pleased with our community's ability to respond to this pandemic on a local level. We believe that the early decisive position taken by this governing body has directly resulted in preservation of health and life, and our community is very grateful. Though we were unable to quantify

the amount of human suffering prevented through these decisions, we did understand that the actions we were recommending would result in significant negative impacts on virtually every sector of the local, state, and national economy, including healthcare, and that has certainly proven to be true.

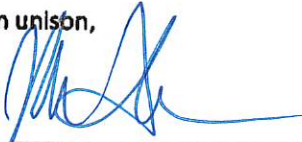
As a community, state and nation, we are now entering the next phase in our response that involves thoughtful policy planning to ease certain restrictions that move us back toward economic vitality and some sense of normalcy while continuing to protect the health and safety of our community. After careful review of the modeling forecasts that give us a glimpse into our future and the data that is evidence of what we are experiencing today, we jointly support the gradual easing of some restrictions, including the opening of the beaches, with the following recommended supports to continue to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in our community:

- Assurance that gatherings of less than 10 people, and maintenance of six feet between persons;
- Continuation of the requirement for individuals entering our community and state from stated "hot spots" to self-quarantine for 14 days upon arrival; and
- Continued careful attention to COVID-19 confirmed positive cases and hospitalization rates in our community. At the first sign of expanded transmission and/or severity of cases, we would strongly encourage you to re-evaluate the situation and take appropriate action to ensure the continued health and safety of our community.

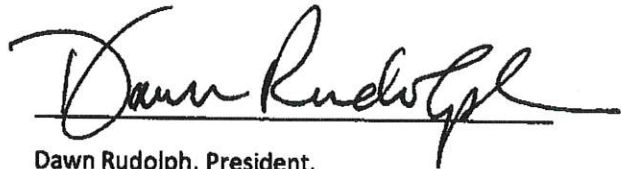
We strongly believe that our community of Pensacola, as one metropolitan statistical area (MSA), would benefit greatly from consistent social distancing restrictions and supports being implemented in both Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, and therefore urge your continued collaboration with the Board of County Commissioners of Santa Rosa county.

In closing, we stand unified in our support of our community and you as our local elected leaders throughout this COVID-19 crisis. We thank you for your leadership and your collaboration as we work to ensure our community and citizens make it through this pandemic safe and well.

In unison,



Mark Faulkner, President & CEO,
Baptist Health Care



Dawn Rudolph, President,
Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital



Gay Nord, CEO,
West Florida Hospital