

# INDIVISIBLE MONTGOMERY

April 16, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence Hogan, Jr.  
Office of the Governor  
State House, State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Ralph Northam  
Office of the Governor  
1111 E. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Muriel Bowser  
Office of the Mayor  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C., 20004

Dear Gov. Hogan, Mayor Bowser and Gov. Northam,

We are writing to thank you, the leaders of the Washington Metro area, for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your actions have saved the lives of Maryland, D.C., and Virginia residents as well as other Americans and people across the globe.

We are also writing to strongly encourage you to ignore and resist all urgings, including those from President Donald Trump and his emissaries, to prematurely lift any precautionary measures implemented to protect our communities.

President Trump and some others are pushing to “reopen” the country in the next few weeks. It is not clear what authority the President has in this context because it was you, mayors and governors, who enacted the measures necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. And while we are beginning to see the fruits of our month-long effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, we are nowhere close to ensuring that we are safe from this disease.

Indivisible Montgomery is a group of over 1,700 Montgomery County, Maryland residents committed to transparency in government and working to improve the lives of those in our community. We work and have friends and family in all three of your jurisdictions and, like many residents of this area, come and go across these borders on a regular basis.

Since it became apparent that COVID-19 would directly affect our community, we have adhered to all physical distancing measures, restricted travel, canceled in-person meetings, and worked to volunteer and donate to help those struggling in these difficult times. And as we watch some of our friends and family fall ill with COVID-19, we are acutely aware of just how devastating a disease this is.

Because there is so much travel between Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia, it is critical that the precautionary measures our communities take be coordinated across these jurisdictions. Lifting these measures in one area without lifting them in another could lead to a resurgence of COVID-19 across the entire area and undermine the work that so many of us have done.

Indivisible Montgomery looks forward to the day where our community is safe from COVID-19 and these precautionary measures are lifted. However, that date should not be determined by economic or political benefit. Rather, scientific and public health experts who have properly evaluated the threat of the virus to our community should signal when it is clear to resume our public lives. Furthermore, there should be a joint agreement among all local leaders as to how and when to relax physical distancing and other measures.

The residents of the Washington Metro area have abided by the commonsense restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. Prematurely lifting precautionary measures would undo all of the work we have done and put millions of lives at risk. We encourage you to continue to listen to the scientific and public health experts and to coordinate your actions across all jurisdictions to ensure the health and safety of those in the Washington Metro area.

Respectfully,

Christopher L. Pickett, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, Indivisible Montgomery

cc:

Marc Elrich – Montgomery County Council Executive  
Angela D. Alsobrooks – Prince George’s County Executive  
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq – President, Charles County Commissioners  
Christopher E. Martino – Prince William County Executive  
Phyllis J. Randall – Chair At-Large, Loudon County Government Board of Supervisors  
Jeffrey C. McKay – Chair, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
Mark Schwartz – Manager, Arlington County  
Robert A. Stalzer – Manager, Fairfax City  
Justin M. Wilson – Mayor, Alexandria City  
Harry J. Parrish, II – Mayor, Manassas City  
Laszlo Palko – Manager, City of Manassas Park