

Moscow Emergency Physicians, PLLC

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Dear Moscow City Council,

We are writing this letter to you as front line medical providers as well as deeply invested community members. As we enter the ninth month of the COVID-19 pandemic and the hospitalization rate on the Palouse continues to climb, we must not let down our guard. As a community, we have to remain diligent, listen to science, and continue to take the public health measures necessary to maintain our healthcare system.

We are seeing in our surrounding communities the effects of relaxed precautions, and we are seeing the effects of “pandemic fatigue” in our own community. Our ability to transfer non-COVID patients for specialized treatment (heart attacks, stroke, trauma etc.) is dwindling, and at times impossible. As COVID-19 cases rise in our town, Gritman and EMS staff are put at higher risk and actually are becoming infected which not only threatens the health of them and their families, but prevents them from caring for patients, further straining our system.

There is consensus among the international medical community that social distancing and universal masking is the easiest, cheapest, and most effective way of preventing the spread of COVID-19. The lag in our number of cases in Moscow is a direct result of Moscow’s protocols that were implemented

early and aggressively. There is a growing body of research both at the local and state levels across the United States to show a significant reduction (sometimes as high as 75%) in COVID-19 cases after mask mandates and social gathering restrictions were implemented. Moscow, in many ways, was ahead of these other communities and we are in a much better position now because of it.

We urge the Moscow City Council to listen to science and maintain the mask ordinance for as long as it takes to maintain the operability, safety, and health of our community. At this time we cannot let personal beliefs or agenda shape public policy. The stakes are too high.

Sincerely,

Moscow Emergency Physicians, PLLC