



DONALD P. WAGNER
ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
THIRD DISTRICT

ORANGE COUNTY HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
333 W. SANTA ANA BLVD.
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701
PHONE (714) 834-3330 FAX (714) 834-6190
<https://donwagnerca.com/>

September 17, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Orange County, California, home to 3.2 million people, is the third most populous county in the state and sixth in the United States. With less than 800 square miles, we are one of the most densely populated counties in the nation. And we need your help.

Since mid-March, our residents have dutifully complied with the ever-changing directives from Governor Newsom. Our hospitals never reached capacity. We flattened the curve. We developed a safe reopening plan to which the governor promptly and punitively closed our beaches based on only a few misleading newspaper photos. Now, the governor is on his third scheme to respond to the pandemic. This one abandons scientific metrics he and the medical community formerly considered important – specifically, hospital and ICU capacity and death rates. He now conditions reopening on meeting vague social justice metrics rather than the achievement of scientific milestones.

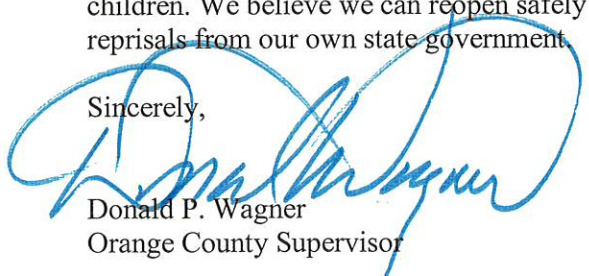
Our families, businesses, churches, and schools want to reopen. Our governor's lock down is not based on science, which tells us who is vulnerable, who should be protected, and who is safe enough to go out.

Yet Governor Newsom has specifically threatened to withhold Federal funds to “disobedient” counties that develop their own safe reopening plans in response to local needs and local conditions. **Mr. President, my request to you is that you and the Congress direct future Federal COVID relief funds straight to California's counties, instead of allowing the governor to hoard them, re-direct them to his favored communities, or use them to extort us into complying with his unscientific directives.**

I wish this was an idle threat from Gov. Newsom, but he has demonstrated a willingness to use the full weight of the state against small business owners barely holding on to their livelihoods and to their American dreams. He has threatened to pull licenses, step up regulatory harassment of our businesses, and otherwise unleash on us the panoply of state law enforcement if we do not meekly follow his orders.

Mr. President, please help us. The governor's threats are not appropriate in a free society. It is punitive and counter-productive based on the psychological and physical harm it is causing, especially to our children. We believe we can reopen safely and will do so with your assurance that we are safe from reprisals from our own state government.

Sincerely,


Donald P. Wagner
Orange County Supervisor