



September 21, 2020

Jennifer Wilson
Mayor

Erin Litvack
Deputy Mayor, County
Services

Darrin Casper
Deputy Mayor, Finance
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Catherine Kanter
Deputy Mayor, Regional
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Kerri Nakamura
Chief of Staff

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert
State of Utah
Utah State Capitol
350 State Street, #200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114

Dear Governor Herbert:

I believe you would agree that the past six months have been among the most challenging of our time in public office. I appreciate your ongoing commitment and concern for the residents of the State of Utah.

As September began, we at Salt Lake County shared your cautious optimism that the measures in place were controlling the spread of COVID-19. The recent and dramatic surge in cases has given pause and a renewed level of concern.

I understand that today you met with your team to consider next steps and will be announcing those options tomorrow.

Like your team at the State, my team at Salt Lake County has been working daily to develop specific interventions to slow the spread of the disease. Our actions have been guided by data and my team is committed to intervene when the data is clear that we should. Daily data reports helped us develop successful interventions such as:

- An early and effective strategy for quarantine and isolation that led to very different outcomes for the disease within Salt Lake County's homeless and unsheltered populations. Peer communities have not shared our success in this area.
- A collaborative plan to target disease hot spots in underserved communities. Today we have thankfully tamped down many of the hot spots in diverse, immigrant, and refugee neighborhoods.
- A proven countywide mask mandate on June 27 that slowed the spread of the disease. For weeks, Salt Lake County's new cases rose at a far slower rate than those of other counties in Utah.

I am reaching out today because, with the surge in cases we are facing, Salt Lake County has exhausted most tools that will make a meaningful difference. My urgency is grounded in the fact that Salt Lake County is the heart of the hospital system in Utah. Despite our best efforts in Salt Lake County, cases from outside of the County will flow to our medical system and likely create a strain that the system cannot handle.

Our efforts in Salt Lake County are hamstrung by a lack of discipline and a continued denial by some of the severity of the disease and the veracity of the science. Thankfully, you have been a champion of science and you have remained steadfast in your pleas with the public to comply with two simple, yet effective, ideas: socially distance and mask up!

Today, I implore you to take it a step further ***and implement a statewide mask mandate***. Not only does the health of Utah depend upon strong action, the future of our economy is at stake. The surge of cases in Utah has attracted national attention and it is not positive. The unchecked surge harms our reputation and fails to instill the consumer confidence we desperately need as we hope to salvage our tourism, ski, and convention industries in 2021 and beyond.

Four hundred forty-six deaths as of today are too many. Nearly 65,000 Utahns afflicted with a disease for which simple measures will slow the spread is heartbreaking. Strong action by you today will mitigate loss and illness. Please Governor, we need you to move from requests to requirements.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jenny" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wilson".

Jenny Wilson
Mayor of Salt Lake County