

Good morning,

As we continue to open more businesses in Mendocino County, I would like to encourage you to consider the COVID-19 testing needs here on the Coast. Our tourist-based economy has been harder hit than other inland parts of the County. We desperately need to open up our hotels and other tourist-based businesses but we also have a greater risk in attracting more out of county and out of state visitors who may carry the virus with them. A strong testing program county-wide will help us manage that transition and better control the spread of the virus.

I understand the need to maximize the capacity of the OptumServe but the expectation that residents, including essential workers, drive three to four hours round trip to get tested isn't reasonable or fair. The reasoning that if residents on the Coast can make it to Costco then there is no reason they can't drive for COVID-19 testing doesn't address the needs of the 20,000 folks who live here.

We also don't expect the County Health Department to carry the full burden of providing testing on the Coast. Mendocino Coast Clinics, the Mendocino Coast District Hospital, City staff and elected officials, Coastal Street Medicine and other local nonprofits and businesses have successfully conducted upwards of 700 surveillance tests here in Fort Bragg. I can only speak for the City, but we are willing and committed to chipping in to ensure a consistent and regular testing program is available county-wide. We want to be a partner but we need the County's help.

Thank you for considering the need for and impact of testing here on the Coast in your decision making.

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