

PUBLIC COMMENT TO MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

April 28, 2020

Version 2

Here are my Public Comments stated today, as well as the comments that I did not have time to say, which are in italics.

Thank you Honorable Board for this opportunity. I'm John Gallo. I grew up here, then left, got my Ph.D in Geography studying regional sustainability, and returned in 2014 with my wife and kids to put down our roots.

We are living in extraordinary times. The goal of this three minute comment is to help Mendocino County become more self-reliant, more self-sustaining. I'm also making a specific request from the County that will help.

Here are four facts that can be combined to create a scenario for the next year:

1. "NIH official Anthony Fauci has repeatedly cited a timeline of 12 to 18 months for creating a vaccine, which is frustratingly slow to the bulk of the public. *But vaccine development experts say it is extremely optimistic relative to past vaccine work.*" *(citations are below)*
2. We are also finding out that the virus is much worse than previous coronavirus behaviors. It attacks many organs, not just the lungs. In some cases it is also attacking the kidneys, intestines, or liver, for others it is clotting the blood, causing heart attacks and strokes, in others it is crossing the blood brain barrier. This is old news to China and Italy, but is new news here in the US, now reported in the Washington Post.
3. People that recover from the virus are getting it again, oftentimes worse. The Korean CDC is saying that of the people studied, it appears they are not getting reinfected by others, but rather that the virus appears to be reactivating.
4. The CDC Director states that the second wave, the one that is predicted to hit this Winter during the Flu season, is going to have a much bigger impact, *and put quote unimaginable strain end quote on our health care system.*

Now, I know that many people listening are more afraid of fear about the virus than the virus itself. I'm not trying to spread fear. I'm holding back on what I know that is very scary.

Instead, I'm laying out the following scenario: that by the Winter the world's public will finally be aware and convinced of all of the above. Because this awareness, and the second wave of death that will be happening, most of our world's supply chains will be impacted, not just a few like we'll have later this summer.

And in this scenario, the Bay Area and Sacramento Metropolis will be a mess, and be first in those supply chains before us.

This is not to mention the impact to our public health and social fabric here in this county.

Of course, there is also the unlikely scenario of a vaccine coming out before the winter. I'd much rather plan for the worst, and be wrong, than plan for things to get back to normal, and be wrong when the worst hits.

Note to self: [AT 1:20 left skip to the BELOW]

So, what should we do now?

One of the benefits of all this is that a giant Pause button has been hit, and we get a chance to reassess, and to recognize that there were some things about the pre-COVID-19 world that we loved and miss, and things about it that we did not love so much, and can change.

One thing we can change is the ability to empower and engage the the citizenry as one big team.

Yes, we need to come together as one big team. We need to temporarily leave behind the old approach of relying on the politics of personal self interest. We need to be Mendo Strong.

To pursue this, we should have a massive brainstorming event. If the County or someone can set up an online survey for ideas, that would be fantastic. I could provide some suggestions for making this easy if you like. This will activate our countywide team of people.

A key question could be: what can we do this summer to help us get through the winter?

For one, we'll need to grow more food, lots more food.

Lets find ways to reward people that increase their food production this year.

How can we do this without costing County Government money?

What can we do to encourage Victory Gardens of all types and sizes?

*Here is one of many ideas that could come: Maybe the County Department that normally promotes tourism can get ahead of the curve and promote **Mendo County Victory Juice and***

Mendo Victory Raisons, which don't taste as good as normal grape juice or raisins, but might make more money for vintners than wine, in this particular year...Of course, the vintners would need to steer this effort.

I have *more* ideas that the County could act on that I can detail in that survey or at the next time I speak.

Finally, one of the best ways to win two fights in a row is to avoid the first one, so the longer we can keep wise distancing in place, the better.

Thank you

John Gallo

Sources: