



DR. FAUCI, WE'D LIKE A SECOND OPINION

Dear Dr. Fauci,

You are the nation's leading voice on how and when society reopens from the pandemic-induced shutdown. And while Americans appreciate your service, your voice represents one of many important perspectives in the medical field. Just as Americans routinely seek a second opinion regarding any serious medical procedure, we ask respectfully for a second opinion on this urgent issue before us.

Dr. Scott Atlas, former chief of neuroradiology at Stanford University recently wrote: "Let's stop underemphasizing empirical evidence while instead doubling down on hypothetical models. Facts matter." He went on to make the case that, "with sensible precautions and sanitization standards, most workplaces and businesses should reopen."

We're not just concerned about the 30 million small business owners and the 60 million people they employ. The economy is certainly a concern, but so is the health of all Americans not threatened by the virus. The shutdown has broad health, economic, and societal impacts that have been largely overlooked in the official reopening debate.

While Covid-19 can be deadly, so can delaying needed healthcare procedures because hospitals are closed to non-Covid patients. Delaying treatments for cancer or other chronic diseases can dramatically worsen treatment outcomes. There are thousands of hospitals across the nation that do not have a serious problem with Covid patients but are banned from treating ordinary patients.

New York emergency physician Daniel Murphy calls for reopening, warning that "the growing numbers dying at home during this crisis must include fatal myocardial infarctions, asthma exacerbations, bacterial infections, and strokes."

As a result of bans on non-Covid care, healthcare workers are being rewarded for their hard work with pay cuts and pink slips. Opening up hospitals and surgical centers for elective surgeries and other procedures will not only help treat patients early when intervention can have the most impact but also bring back the healthcare sector that represents 18 percent of the economy.

The economic consequences of the shutdown go far beyond just the healthcare sector. The unemployment rate is currently 14.7 percent, the highest level since the Great Depression. Across the country, small businesses have been either forced to close up shop or have seen their customers disappear because of the pandemic-induced crisis. According to one survey, about one-third of small businesses won't be able to reopen. Those businesses represent real lives. Real life savings. Real jobs that may never come back.

Poor economic prospects lead to increased suicides. The national Disaster Distress Helpline saw a 338 percent increase in call volume in March compared with February. Suicide rates generally rise by about one percent for every one percentage point increase in unemployment.

The mental health of millions of Americans was best summarized by Jamie Stewart, a 37-year-old from Bonita Springs, who lost her job as a shift manager and bartender in a local Florida resort. She recently rented a room in her home to make ends meet and signed up for food stamps to cover her weekly grocery bills. "My mental health has deteriorated to a point that I don't recognize myself anymore," she told a reporter for the Associated Press.

Millions of us, Dr. Fauci, don't recognize our lives anymore. And the desire to return to work and normal life is not driven by greed. It is driven by biological need. Human beings are hardwired for work, and derive meaning from work. But it wasn't just work that was stripped from life. The social aspects of our life that give it meaning and purpose were stripped, too. As a Newsweek columnist recently wrote, "All the sports leagues we form as Americans—and poker, bridge and bingo, too—were taken from us. Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion halls were closed. Public schools and private schools were closed, which also put an end to after school activities like band and theater. Restaurants and bars, places we congregate with friends and family, were closed. So were Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and Al-Anon meetings across the nation. And the same with our churches, synagogues and mosques."

This is not a question of life v. the economy. The real choice is Life v. Life. Shutting down society was intended to flatten the curve and prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed. It has achieved these goals at immense economic and social cost. The shutdown was not intended to continue until there is a cure or zero deaths. By using strategic testing, tracing, and smart business innovations, we can isolate the few to protect the many instead of isolating the many to protect the few.

We know that you have America's interests at heart but fear your limited view is causing too much unneeded pain. We ask you again: Can we get a second opinion?

Sincerely,

Alfredo Ortiz
President and CEO
Job Creators Network

If you're a health care professional with a different position than Dr. Fauci on opening the economy, we want to hear your second opinion. Go to FauciSecondOpinion.com and fill out the form.

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