

MASK COMMENTARY

JULY 10, 2020

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The Springfield City Council is set to vote on a mask ordinance (2020-159) at the City Council Meeting on Monday, July 13, 2020.¹ The ordinance starts with several Whereas statements. Two of them reference the World Health Organization (WHO). The first one states, “the World Health Organization Director General declared an outbreak of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency.” The second one states, “the World Health Organization Director General characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic;”

Let’s look at the WHO definition of an emergency.²

“Emergency is a term describing a state. It is a managerial term, demanding decision and followup in terms of extra-ordinary measures (Oxford Pocket Dictionary, 1992). A “state of emergency” demands to “be declared” or imposed by somebody in authority, who, at a certain moment, will also lift it. Thus, it is usually defined in time and space, it requires threshold values to be recognized, and it implies rules of engagement and an exit strategy. Conceptually, it relates best to Response.”

Here is the definition of emergency threshhod.³

“Mortality rate above which an emergency is said to be occurring. Usually taken as a crude mortality rate of 1 per 10 000 per day, or as an under-five mortality rate of 2 per 10 000 per day (ODI/HPN paper 52, 2005, Checchi and Roberts).”

Clearly, Springfield does not meet this definition since there has not been a death in Greene County for two months.

(Click [HERE](#) for a copy of the ordinance)

¹ <https://www.springfieldmo.gov/AgendaCenter/Search/?term=&CIDs=1,35,34,&startDate=&endDate=&dateRange=&dateSelector=>

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/updated-who-recommendations-for-international-traffic-in-relation-to-covid-19-outbreak#:~:text=On%2030%20January%202020%2C%20the%20Director-General%20of%20the,emergency%20of%20international%20concern%20and%20issued%20Temporary%20Recommendations>

³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/updated-who-recommendations-for-international-traffic-in-relation-to-covid-19-outbreak#:~:text=On%2030%20January%202020%2C%20the%20Director-General%20of%20the,emergency%20of%20international%20concern%20and%20issued%20Temporary%20Recommendations>

This is a table showing the COVID-19 deaths and cases for Missouri and Greene County for the past two weeks.

COVID-19 DEATHS AND CASES IN MISSOURI AND GREENE COUNTY									
DATE	CUMULATIVE DEATHS IN MISSOURI	DAILY INCREASE IN DEATHS	DEATHS PER 10,000 POPULATION	CUMULATIVE CASES IN MISSOURI	DAILY INCREASE IN CASES	CASES PER 10,000 POPULATION	CUMULATIVE CASES IN GREENE COUNTY	DAILY INCREASE IN CASES	CASES PER 10,000 POPULATION
July 9	1,051	5		25,999	795		407	22	
July 8	1,046	4		25,204	575		385	12	
July 7	1,042	14		24,629	773		373	22	
July 6	1,028	0		23,856	420		351	23	
July 5	1,028	1		23,436	221		328	11	
July 4	1,027	5		23,215	385		317	9	
July 3	1,022	5		22,830	903		308	10	
July 2	1,017	2		21,927	376		298	6	
July 1	1,015	17		21,551	508		292	0	
June 30	998	1		21,043	468		292	10	
June 29	997	1		20,575	314		282	17	
June 28	996	6		20,261	347		265	0	
June 27	990	8		19,914	1,046		265	5	
June 26	982	7		18,868	725		260	14	
June 25	975			18,143			246		
2 Week Average		5	0.01		561	0.9		12	0.4
		MO Population	6,100,000				Greene Co. Pop.	290,000	
Source:	https://covidtracking.com/data/state/missouri#historical								
Source:	https://corona.help/country/united-states/state/missouri								

We have been told that the deaths and number of cases in Missouri and Greene County have been surging for the past two weeks. This shows that the deaths in Missouri per 10,000 population over the last two weeks is 0.01. That does not even come close to the WHO definition of an emergency threshold of 1. Not even the number of cases in Missouri (0.9) and Greene County (0.4) exceeded the emergency threshold. About every ten years, there is a severe influenza season. We don't shut down the city and mandate masks when the flu spikes and fills the hospitals for a week.

By the City Councils definition in Ordinance 2020-159, this does not meet the criteria for an emergency. Before the City Council takes any vote, they need to clarify the ordinance. What Mayor McClure really needs to do is declare that a state of civil emergency no longer exists, lift all of the restrictions, stop crippling the city economically, and let us get back to normal.

All opinions expressed here are solely mine and do not reflect the opinions of any business or organization with which I am affiliated. It is a sad commentary on our society that I have to add this disclaimer.