An open letter from public health leaders around the nation:

Dear Fellow Residents,              April 3, 2020

As public health leaders of the largest cities and counties in this country, it is our mission and duty to assure transparency during this time of great uncertainty.

Our country has not faced a public health threat like COVID-19 in over 100 years. With worldwide daily increases in both confirmed cases and deaths, it is clear to us as public health experts that this pandemic is gaining momentum and not soon subsiding. If we do not act quickly and collaboratively, many more lives will be lost across our country.

It does no one any good to soften the reality of what we are confronting. We must all prepare ourselves for loss—of normal routines and services, of economic security, and, tragically, of many, many lives. The only question now is how great the losses will be—an outcome that depends on our shared commitment to take individual responsibility and civic accountability for adhering to preventative measures, and, above all else, to stay home.

To save lives, we urgently need to slow the spread of the virus now. Many of our cities have put measures in place to sharply limit the spread of COVID-19. But no matter the extent of these measures, and even if you feel fine, we again implore you: Just Stay Home!

We know there are certain people, essential workers, who must work, and we thank them for their dedication. Your staying home helps keep them as safe as possible.

Staying home will protect both you and everyone you would otherwise come in contact with. If everyone stays home as much as possible, we will limit the spread of the virus, we will greatly reduce the number of people getting sick, and we will save many lives.

It is also critical to follow other recommended and mandatory measures to ease the burden on our health care system. If too many people rush to our emergency rooms for non-emergency care, our system will buckle under the weight of the demand.


We understand that what we are asking of you is not easy. We know that for many of you, sounding this alarm may cause fear and anxiety. But, we must.

While we ask you to stay apart physically, we implore you to come together emotionally and spiritually. Together we are the best defense against this pandemic.

In gratitude,

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