

# An Open Letter to the Tyrant of Virginia

Dear Governor Northam:

I hope this letter of objection finds you well in the middle of this lockdown you have declared here in Virginia.

As you must be aware, many of your fellow citizens are suffering from business closures and stay-at-home orders. Some people I know here in Front Royal – the baristas and cooks who work at my favorite coffee shop, the children of friends missing classes and school events, Catholics who are desperate to begin receiving the sacraments again – have undergone job losses, witnessed an increase in depression among loved ones, and may lose not only their livelihoods but their savings and homes as well.

Are you sure we've handled this event properly?

Let's go back to 1969 for a moment. You were nine or 10 years old, and I was 18. I was in college, you were in elementary school, it was the year of Woodstock, and the [Hong Kong Flu](#) was in full swing, eventually killing over 100,000 Americans, most of them over the age of 65. Your school didn't close, mine didn't close, businesses didn't close, the stock market stayed open, and we celebrated a moon landing. At my college, I watched that landing in an auditorium with 1,200 other people.

Were people less compassionate then, or dumber? Or did they do the right thing and let that flu bring about herd immunity?

Supposedly you were allowing "non-essential" businesses in the state to reopen on May 8, at least the ones that have not already gone out of business. Yet on Monday May 4, you kicked that [opening date back 10 more days](#). You announced a three-

phase reopening plan that you and the experts claim will take six weeks, but may also last "[even longer](#)."

Can you explain what you mean by "non-essential" to my unemployed friend Claire at the coffee shop?

Explain, too, by what constitutional authority you acted. On May 3, the Department of Justice [announced](#) that it was taking the side of a Virginia church after a pastor held a Palm Sunday service with 16 congregants in a church that can seat 293 people. Several of your edicts violate the First Amendment. In a state whose motto is *Sic Semper Tyrannis* – "Thus Always to Tyrants" – and whose native sons include the author of the Declaration of Independence and the Father of the Constitution, we seem to have gone a bit off course, don't you think?

Here's a suggestion for you. Why don't you take a drive to Bristol, Virginia, which sits on the border of Bristol, Tennessee, and explain to the guy who owns a burger joint why his parking lot remains empty while the parking lot of the café across the street in Tennessee is full of customers' cars? I'd love to hear what that man has to say to you.

Another query: Why did you lock down the entire state? Take a quick look at this [map](#) and you will note that the great bulk of coronavirus cases are in Northern Virginia near Washington, D.C. and in Richmond. Some counties in Southwest Virginia have yet to report a single case. Why did you treat places like Abington as if they were Arlington?

Governors like you told us we needed to "flatten the curve" of coronavirus cases so that our hospitals wouldn't be overwhelmed. Hospitals in most states are far from facing such an ordeal. Meanwhile, elective surgeries were postponed, and many hospitals have sent employees home. How will you explain that situation when this "emergency" ends?

One last question: Let's say you decide to allow the state to

reopen on the latest date you've set. What happens when more coronavirus outbreaks occur? You know they will. Will you close us down again?

Even more interesting, what happens if the number of cases continues to dwindle? Would that circumstance indicate that the lockdown which has damaged so many lives was a necessary measure of protection? Not at all. Other factors – the onset of warmer weather, and people who caught the bug, remained asymptomatic, and are now immune – might account for a reduction in cases. We'll never really know.

Despite the tone of this letter, allow me to add that I sympathize with all of you governors who have faced this crisis. You had to make tough choices with enormous ramifications. No one envies you having to make these decisions.

But enough is enough, Governor. It seems it's time to consider reopening and putting Virginians back to work.

Sincerely,

Jeff Minick

In case my fellow Virginians agree with me here, please call the Governor's Office at 804-786-2211. If you disagree and believe Virginia should be kept locked down, please feel free to call as well.

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[Image Credit: YouTube-CBS News, "[Virginia Governor Ralph Northam says 'I'm not going anywhere'](#)"]

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