



Delivered via mail and electronic mail

Sen. Jeff Wilson, on behalf of Senate Freedom Caucus
P.O. Box 40419
109-B Irv Newhouse Building
Olympia, WA 98504

March 2, 2022

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor
State of Washington
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Gov. Inslee,

We are writing because we would like to accept the generous offer you extended at your news conference of Feb. 28, 2022.

At that news conference, in response to a reporter's question, you stated that you would be willing to sit down with Republicans and show them your numbers regarding COVID justifying the continuance of the declaration of emergency. You stated, "I will be happy to talk to them about the numbers."

We want you to know we are delighted by this new spirit of cooperation from your office, and we are eager to take you up on it. This emergency was declared Feb. 29, 2020, and as of yesterday entered its third year. We would love to see any scientific justification you might have to demonstrate that the emergency declaration should be continued. This declaration gives you extraordinary powers to suspend laws and issue orders. We agree with you, there really ought to be some sort of justification for this continued assumption of power and authority by the governor's office, and we are excited that you are willing to share it with us.


We are in a different position than most states. Other states ensure that their Legislatures play an important role in the decision-making process during emergencies, requiring legislative reauthorization of emergency declarations that drag on for months and months. Washington is one of just four states that allow their governors to decide when to end a declaration of emergency and thus relinquish their extraordinary powers.

We have always believed that with great power comes great responsibility, and one of those responsibilities is to explain to the people why that great power is necessary.

This is why your offer is so refreshing, signaling a change in approach from your office. The Senate Republican Caucus has sent your office 55 formal letters raising questions about various matters of policy during this COVID emergency. Only 10 have been answered. We were very happy to hear that you are interested in discussing this matter with Republicans.

We appreciate that you are willing to meet, and we look forward to seeing your numbers. We would also like to bring staff to this meeting, so that we can make sure there is a rigorous inspection of statistics and assumptions, and that all the right questions are asked. Monday March 7 or Tuesday March 8 at 9:00 AM works for us. If there is some other time you would prefer, please let us know. What times and dates work for you?

Sincerely,



Sen. Jeff Wilson, R-Longview



Sen. Phil Fortunato, R-Auburn



Sen. Mike Padden, R-Spokane Valley



Sen. Jim McCune, R-Graham