

I strongly oppose the Board of Health Regulation - Vaccination Requirements to Enter Bars, Restaurants, Recreation Centers, and Other Covered Establishments. The last 45 days in Montgomery County, and the world, unquestionably demonstrates vaccines and boosters do not stop the spread of COVID-19. We are 85% vaccinated in this county. And yet COVID spread like wildfire here. This happened throughout the country and the world notwithstanding the vaccination rates in communities. Within my own network, I know countless people who were vaccinated and boosted who contracted, and spread, COVID-19 in the last 45 days. Most notably, Governor Hogan and County Executive Elrich contracted COVID notwithstanding the fact that they were vaccinated and boosted. This Regulation is based on an erroneous predication that vaccines could stop the spread of COVID. The virus has changed. Vaccines provide protection against severe disease but do not stop the spread of COVID. New York City's vaccine passport system did nothing to slow the explosive spread of COVID there notwithstanding the fact that over 80% of all New York City residents are vaccinated. Given this new reality, you cannot in good faith move forward with a regulation that will divide our citizens into two separate classes without any benefit to stopping the spread of COVID-19. This is not the right tactic to convince county residents to get vaccinated. It is underhanded and authoritarian.

Moving forward with this Regulation will not only divide the citizens of this county, but it will harm businesses. Those who will not vaccinate themselves or their children based on their own assessment of their risk to COVID will go elsewhere to spend their dollars. Moreover, it will require businesses to confront patrons, adults and children, over their private medical decisions. These harms are obvious. When this Regulation was conceived, perhaps these harms were thought necessary to stop the spread of COVID. But now that we know the vaccines and boosters do not stop the spread of COVID, imposing these harms on the citizens and businesses of this county is completely irrational. How can you subject a child to being interrogated over their medical decisions when entering an establishment when the scientific and real-world evidence shows the vaccinated and unvaccinated children can spread COVID just the same? It is simply cruel to place children in that situation given the reality of what vaccines actually do.

I understand you are all under immense pressure to demonstrate you are doing everything you can to control COVID. Please understand that there are thousands of citizens in this county who accept the reality of the world we now live-in. COVID is endemic. No government official can stop the spread of a highly contagious air-borne novel virus that is spreading rapidly throughout the world. Please do not pass this Regulation simply to placate those who irrationally cling to the notion that you have any power to stop COVID or that the vaccines are impenetrable barriers that will bring us to zero COVID. You do not have that power. And the vaccines clearly will not stop the spread of COVID. I accept this reality and do not fault you for the daily COVID numbers. The number of citizens who accept the new reality grows daily and will support you when you reject this irrational Regulation. Moving forward with this Regulation in the face of irrefutable real-world evidence that it will not stop the spread of COVID will undermine your own authority. Should you pass this divisive Regulation, you will place yourselves squarely on the wrong side of history and do irreversible damage to this county.