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October 27, 2020

The Honorable John Cruikshank
City of Rancho Palos Verdes
30940 Hawthorne Blvd.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5391

RE: REOPENING INDOOR OPERATIONS IN BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, AND PLACES OF WORSHIP

Dear Mayor Cruikshank:

Thank you for your October 6, 2020 letter and your commitment to a safe and responsible reopening for the City of Rancho Palos Verdes and Los Angeles County. I appreciate the concerns you shared with respect to the County's reopening guidelines. As you are aware, Los Angeles County's plans for reopening are aligned with California's blueprint for reducing COVID-19 which includes criteria that will be used to determine what activities or sectors can be reopened in California counties. Under this [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#), each county has been assigned to a Tier based on how well it is doing on a set of measures that relate to COVID-19 community transmission.

Los Angeles County is currently in Tier 1, meaning that there is widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the county. Recent business re-openings in Los Angeles County reflect our closer alignment with the openings permitted by the State in Tier 1. Throughout the pandemic, the State sets the minimum threshold for openings and counties are permitted to move more slowly than the State, based on our own local considerations, but we cannot move more quickly. In addition, the State to date has not approved of cities advancing more rapidly than the county in which they are located.

Given the size and diversity of the County, I understand your city's desire to move at its own pace. However, the current plan sets us on a path forward together with the goal of minimizing COVID-19 related cases, hospitalizations, and deaths as more people begin to interact through countywide business and activity openings and more children attend in-person school.

As with all re-openings, Los Angeles County is taking a staged approach to re-opening schools to reduce the risk to students, teachers, and their families and community. This approach will allow us to carefully monitor how safely these schools can reopen and if they can, classroom instruction will expand to more students who want to return.

The Honorable John Cruikshank
October 27, 2020
Page 2

Although cases of COVID-19 are attributed to home address, that does not indicate where exposure necessarily occurred, particularly when we have such a large and mobile population. So, a low case count in one's community may appear to indicate that there is a lower risk of exposure there, yet people could be getting exposed elsewhere such as in the workplace. Surveillance data is hard to generalize when there is a lot of virus circulating.

Public Health will continue to collect and monitor our data to determine the impact of reopening additional sectors on individuals and our healthcare systems in consultation with the Board of Supervisors. I appreciate your and your city's continued support and diligence as we work toward reopening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Barbara Ferrer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Barbara" and the last name "Ferrer" clearly distinguishable.

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director