

# Can we reopen Pennsylvania?

I am stupid. I don't know why I do it to myself, but I could not resist looking at the latest COVID-19 data in the midst of this ongoing "crisis".

US population 2020	331,404,570
US "confirmed" cases	6,897,756
US Covid deaths	200,818

98% of the population have not contracted the disease.

Of the 2% that did, 3% have died with it.

Keeping in mind, according to CDC data, in only 6% of the deaths were there no co-morbidities present.

Just so you know the three most common co-morbidities for the 94% were obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes. Old age is not a co-morbidity.

The average citizen has a 6 in 10,000 chance of contracting it and dying with it.

The average citizen has a 3.63 in 100,000 chance of contracting it and dying FROM IT EXCLUSIVELY.

Also, interestingly, in the midst of this, the average life expectancy hasn't changed. It hasn't dropped!

Yes, I know, this isn't science; it is 6th grade math.

They throw these huge scary numbers at us and we bend over and comply.

Meanwhile, when put into perspective, the entire reaction and changes in everyone's lives seem pretty over the top.

Yes, it's real. Yes, people are dying.

Sadly, people pass every minute of the day.

I think the people need to choose their own behaviors and levels of risk tolerance.

Remember Covid didn't tank the economy, put people out of work, bankrupt businesses and add trillions to our budget deficit; politicians did and they have the same numbers.

I have seen contact tracing from Maryland and Nashville, TN regarding the number of cases originating in bars and restaurants; I am sure Pennsylvania has similar numbers. There is no significant data indicating bars and restaurants are sources of super spreading; actually, it shows the opposite.

From where I stand, this is impacting all restaurants, not just independents. The issue is that independents do not have the economies of scale or the huge market presence in multiple states, many

which are opened up to a larger degree than Pennsylvania, and are more financially prepared to handle the disruption to business.

However, I am seeing several national chains struggle within this restrictive climate. If they're hurting, how brutal and difficult is this to independents?

To say that alcohol sales, too, lead to situations in which patrons are at a greater risk when consuming alcohol alone, without food, versus eating in the very same place is obviously non-scientific.

Restaurants and bars count on alcohol sales to stay afloat and the sale of alcohol to go doesn't do much. If you are the only game in the neighborhood, it may help; but there are multiple options to get beer and wine in today's marketplace and restaurants can't compete on price nor volume.

It isn't just the restaurants that are affected. Every vendor from the utility companies, food wholesalers, pest control, linen suppliers and yes, food equipment dealers and service companies are impacted by this as well. As is their employees and their vendors as well. It's Economics 101.

I say open everything up and apply the same restrictions on all businesses evenly across the board. Targeting some segments differently and more harshly is not fair.