



IMPACT Statement Against Legal Challenge to Illinois Stay-at-Home Order

As leaders of Illinois Medical Professionals Action Collaborative (IMPACT), we are writing to highlight our strong opposition to the Clay County Circuit Court's April 27 temporary restraining order against Illinois' extended stay-at-home order. While this ruling applies to the plaintiff who filed the lawsuit, other similar lawsuits have since been filed.

As doctors, we care for some of the most complex and vulnerable patients in Illinois. As a result, we bear witness to the devastating effects of COVID-19 on our patients' lives. We've also experienced how the stay-at-home order is saving lives by flattening the curve and slowing the spread of COVID-19. We applaud Governor Pritzker and his ability to execute extremely difficult decisions to protect communities across Illinois based on science, evidence, and guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other national experts. Reversing the stay-at-home order prematurely will result in an increase in cases of COVID-19, deaths from the disease, and put our health systems at risk of becoming overwhelmed by a large influx of patients at the same time.

We agree with Governor Pritzker's statement that reversing this stay at home order now will result in endangering the lives of many individuals across Illinois. The risk of enacting any reopening strategy without the necessary mass testing capabilities, contact tracing workforce (currently minimal) and robust resources to help infected individuals safely quarantine (which is otherwise impossible for far too many of us) is too high to reverse the current order if the health and wellness of Illinoisans is to be taken into account.

It is important to call attention to the 2,355 Illinoisans who have lost their lives since this pandemic began - with almost 53,000 cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in Illinois according to the Illinois Department of Health as of April 30. On Tuesday, April 28, 144 Illinoisans died of COVID-19 in one day. This is amid our best efforts to flatten the curve (efforts that are working; without the measures implemented by our state leaders, death tolls would have been significantly higher).

Until a strategy is in place to reopen the state safely and effectively, we must continue to keep our distance. The plan to reopen must be slow, safe and grounded in the best scientific and medical evidence. It is essential that decisions made by Illinois leadership are made working with scientists, public health experts, physicians, community leaders, government leaders and business stakeholders to determine the safest time and the safest plan to open for everyone. Until then, please, let's keep our distance, stay six feet apart, and not put anyone six feet under.

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