August 7, 2020

Dear Cecil County Citizens,

As we approach mid-August 2020, think about how significantly our lives have changed in a mere six months. COVID-19, “Black Lives Matter,” unemployment rates, small businesses in turmoil, health care services at the brink, mail-in elections, and the list goes on.

Governor Larry Hogan, and our own local health care services, including Christiana Care Union Hospital, Cecil County Health Department and the Department of Emergency Services, as well as the Cecil County Sheriff’s Office personnel and other law enforcement men and women, have performed heroically. In addition, the citizens serving in our volunteer fire services, social services and other non-profits have met the call as we ventured into unknown territories never experienced before.

Our COVID-19 Joint Information Center task force continues to meet regularly and provide weekly updates on local statistics (positive cases, individuals released from isolation, and fatalities), operational closings and changes for government and agencies throughout Cecil County, and contact information for various organizations that serve the public. For the most current COVID-19-related info, visit: https://www.ccgov.org/services/coronavirus.

COVID-19 continues to be a community-spread pandemic. Please remain vigilant and safe in your day-to-day activities as every person we come in contact with is a potential risk to our health. Also, please continue to practice coronavirus courtesies:

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\text{Wear a mask when outside of your home!} \\
\text{Avoid crowds and practice social distancing protocols!} \\
\text{Practice proven hygiene behaviors like washing hands, not touching your face and sneezing into your elbow!}
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Working collectively and watching out for those most vulnerable in our community, we will get through this. It is frustrating and exhausting, but stay the course. Again, we will win.

The fall-out from the misapplication of force by Minneapolis policemen resulting in the death of George Floyd is still resonating across America. We all believe that every man and woman is deserving of our respect and that each should have access to the essential and desired opportunities to sustain a quality existence. Now is the time for each of us to reflect upon our own beliefs and behaviors to determine if our own actions are consistent with the belief that all are created equal.
Cecil County citizens have filed for unemployment benefits at levels never experienced in our history. To say that many of our small businesses are struggling to stay afloat is a gross understatement. While following the proper protocols to keep the virus at a distance, do all that you can to support our local businesses and support our friends and neighbors who have had to seek benefits because they were laid off or had their jobs eliminated.

We all marvel at the sustained efforts of all of our healthcare workers to ensure that we are safe and the level of invasion of the coronavirus in our lives is managed to the degree possible. These heroes are reaching the point of exhaustion as each must be at his/her very best one hundred percent of the time. I know you have already done it, but along with me, continue to thank and support them to the degree that you can and as often as possible.

Mail-in voting for the November 3rd General Election and the re-entry play for K-12 schools in September continue to be subjects receiving much coverage by the professional press, as well on social media sites filled with comments from private citizens. While each opinion is important, I ask that you reflect upon your point to insure it is supported by fact prior to posting. Take time to analyze what you read to ensure that it is based upon fact and truth.

Lastly, remember that we are experiencing a phenomena never before occurring to this magnitude in our history. Attempt to empathize and put yourself in the position of those persons charged with making decisions with seemingly the “weight of the world” upon their shoulders. These are not easy resolutions to make or to implement. I am confident that the decisions are being made with the best interests of Cecil citizens in mind.

Many of us go through periods of frustration and in some cases depression. Our burdens vary from not being able to carry on our lives like we used to, but remember there are some who struggle for food, shelter and other normal necessities of life. The outpouring of community kindness over the last five months makes me tremendously proud. I thank every citizen for the support exhibited each day as Cecil County presses forward to successfully address daily challenges. If we stay together and not quibble about petty partisan matters, we will emerge a better and stronger community.

Dr. Alan J. McCarthy
Cecil County Executive