

My name is Sam McCullough my family purchased and have been operating the Arcade Tavern in Bandon for almost 11 years. We've worked hard to build a successful business that employed 8 people last March and still employs 7 (6 pre COVID and 1 new). We were forced to close March 17th of last year until May 15th. We adapted our business to comply to safety regulations put forward by the State. We fought with customers over masks. We limited group sizes and spaced out our tables. We sanitized surfaces of contact constantly. We turned away business daily to maintain safety.

Bandon was quite busy this summer as road trips were popular during the pandemic. We had license plates from no less than 30 different states in our parking lot. We were busy and we did it safely, as did the majority of bars and restaurants. We operated like that for 6 months with not one call from a contact tracer and not one employee or customer getting sick.

In the fall cases spiked and the knee jerk reaction by the governor was to shut down bars restaurants and gyms, despite a complete lack of evidence that they significantly affect infection rates. Our county was allowed to reopen, then shutdown, then reopen, then shutdown again in early January.

Our county had been shut down for almost 6 weeks. Our infection rate has fluctuated up and down. Other counties have been open for these same 6 weeks and not only remained "high" risk, but actually dropped to "moderate" or "lower". Counties with bars, restaurants, and gyms open have dropped levels while counties with them closed remain extreme. What does a scientific mind deduce?

CLOSING BARS, RESTAURANTS AND GYMS HAS NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE INFECTION RATE.

We are allowed to be open for takeout and outside service. Unfortunately it only allows my employees 1 shift a week. This is not sustainable. So many businesses have failed and many are on the verge.

Please be honest and objectively follow the science instead of playing politics with people's livelihood and well being.