

California State Senate

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November 20, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Statewide Data Request on Consequences of COVID-19

Dear Governor Newsom:

It has been over eight months since you have declared an emergency in this state due to COVID-19, yet your office has not reported the full impact your shutdown has had on residents of our state. Californians deserve transparency when their lives are being altered day to day.

Tens of thousands of businesses have shuttered, millions of Californians are unemployed, the achievement gap in education appears to be widening, and Californians have reported depression and other mental illnesses at alarming rates. Additionally, traditional avenues of reporting suspected child abuse have disappeared and places for domestic violence victims to seek help have diminished. It is clear that the actions taken by your administration have had a severely negative effect on the lives of California residents in many ways.

In recent months, we have seen a growing trend of businesses shuttering and job loss as well as more instances of domestic violence, child abuse, suicide, and depression. Even the World Health Organization agrees that the response to the virus cannot be worse than the problem itself. There has been little to no relief for our communities and residents. At a minimum, the responsibility falls on you to provide all of the data regarding your shutdown orders and the impact on Californians' lives. I am once again reaching out to respectfully request imperative data as it relates to mental health statistics, the achievement gap, domestic violence, and child abuse since your shutdown order has been in effect.

I reached out to the California Department of Public Health in early October asking for available data on the number of suicides, attempted suicides, or mental health concerns in California as it

relates to COVID-19. I was told, *“The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) monitors available data for suicides and attempted suicides. However, the specific relationship between these incidents and COVID-19 is not yet clear.”* This is alarming, disturbing, and unacceptable. At a time when mental health has been reported locally as being on the rise because of COVID-19, the state should at a bare minimum be tracking these numbers and be providing them to the public.

Widespread industry closures and the forced isolation of tens of millions of Californians have had a major effect on mental health and safety. Prioritizing the health and safety of all Californians not only includes physical well-being but must also include emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The state should be doing everything it can to understand the relationship that COVID-19 has had and will continue to have on our constituent’s mental health. Again, I am requesting all California data on mental health, the achievement gap, domestic violence, and child abuse as it relates to COVID-19. Please contact me with any questions at (916) 651-4016 or Senator.Grove@senate.ca.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Grove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shannon" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Grove".

Shannon Grove
Senate Republican Leader, 16th District