

DIANE HARKEY



On the Bright Side - It's not about Masks - it's about Therapeutics

If the press could ever get beyond masks, the President contracting COVID may serve to illuminate us on just how far we have progressed in knowledge and medicine since the onslaught noted in January. The President's messaging through his doctors, and videos could debunk the fear that every COVID diagnosis carries a death sentence.

His recovery will show how far we have come from the early days when there were no therapeutics and/or known treatments available, and contracting COVID-19 was a death sentence. Spotlighting the progress the medical field, which has largely been ignored by members of the press, people can become more comfortable with returning to living again. As we now know, COVID is

asymptomatic in many, and similar to seasonal flu for many others, with only an estimated between 0.1% and 0.41% of the population not recovering.

Many people are truly afraid, and we cannot nor should we ignore that. But what should change this fear-factor is acknowledging the rapid advances in therapies generated in the biotech and biomed field. These were encouraged and facilitated by this Administration and implemented and carried out by leaders in the pharmaceutical industries, such as Gilead, Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Roche and many others. This is an example of government actually working with industry to produce results, life-saving and profitable for all.

We are dealing with a **VIRUS** and most of us will come into contact with it, no matter what we do. When NYC and other places were initially hit, the attack was severe and concentrated; we didn't understand what we were dealing with, there were no known therapies. While hot spots still exist, and will continue to exist, I think we have seen by the President, who was tested daily, as well as his staff, distancing practiced, temperatures taken and areas hygienically cleaned (far more than we would ever imagine in our own households) the virus will spread. *Viruses are extremely small, unlike bacteria, and can travel through most masks and face coverings.*

We may have a vaccine shortly but even if we don't it's time to get back to living, as long as we take precautions. Wash hands, keep a distance and if not outdoors, but inside a place of business or public area wear a mask for everyone's comfort. Seek medical help and/or testing immediately if you feel symptomatic (fever, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat - some or all may apply as we know). Testing is now readily available through local pharmacies with appointment as well as local clinics.

We were never going to stop the virus - however, we did slow the spread to help us deal with ramifications. We are rounding the corner on the COVID-19 pandemic and the President, 74 years old, may be released from hospital before this newsletter reaches you due to therapeutics that were available when Prime Minister Boris Johnson fell ill.

Positive testing should not be the metric - severity should. With many students returning to college campuses, they will do what most college kids do. Yes, they will most likely increase positive tests in their county, but their illness is usually mild. Exercise caution, but know if you succumb, there is something we can do about it to ensure you recover.

There is great hope for the future of medicine, and many new ideas generating and being facilitated by industry leaders in Orange County - visit: <https://www.universitylabpartners.org/> for how our University, my alma mater, UCI, and private companies are partnering to expedite new solutions for your health and wellbeing. San Diego is also very much engaged with UCSD long being a focal point for research and development in this new medical arena. The science, not the politics will save your life.

Election day is November 3, and Your Vote Matters:

Your ballot will be mailed to you on Monday, October 5th. Elections will be close and every vote will count.

Your Voting Options:

1. **Vote by Mail:** Every registered voter in Orange County will receive a vote-by-mail ballot. If you would like to vote by mail simply complete your ballot, seal it in the envelope provided, sign the back and mail it back (No Postage Needed). You can track your ballot and ensure your vote is counted [HERE](#).
2. **Vote In Person:** In Person voting begins on October 30th. You can vote at any Vote Center in Orange County until Election Day. Click [HERE](#) to find your nearest Vote Center.
3. **Drop Off Your Ballot:** You can safely and securely drop off your ballot at any Vote Center or Ballot Drop Box. Click [HERE](#) to find your nearest Vote Center or Ballot Drop Box.

Ballot Recommendations:

I, of course, have a list of candidates I am supporting in South Orange County, and others in areas I can also recommend. I strongly support Laurie Davies for Assembly District 73. My picks for the local city council elections follow the review of the ballot propositions.

My primary and motivating factor in each city and local election is to be sure:

We retain our police services and fund them at a level that allows them to attract and retain officers and staff. Public Safety is the primary role of government. If you don't have a safe and secure community and have law enforcement to ensure safety and compliance with our laws, you will not attract businesses, or feel safe in your community. Public safety needs our attention and support this year.

The cities or district have planned for the rainy day, as budgets are most likely to be underwater based on current tax receipts due to shutdowns. The state is in a hole and appears to keep digging deeper, which means they will be reassessing county and city funding, as they did after the 2008 crash.

Once again, the people of California will be asked to make decisions on very complex ballot propositions. Even if you read through all the legalese, you can still slip up because the ballot titles are misleading.

So, what to do? I only have 2 “YES” recommendations: **Proposition 20 and 22.**

YES - Proposition 20 - Keep Your Communities Safe

See: <https://keepcalsafe.org/about/>

AB 109 (2011), Prop 47 (2014) and Prop 51 (2016) were three measures passed to reduce the state’s prison inmate population. In an attempt to relieve over-crowding in prisons rather than add facilities, AB 109 shifted the imprisonment of those who the state considered non-violent, non-serious and non-sexual offenders from state prisons to local jails, and made counties responsible for supervising certain felons on parole. As a result of these three laws, which included reducing several crimes from felonies to misdemeanors, as well as increasing numbers allowed to be released on parole, we are seeing increasing numbers of neighborhood break-ins and other crimes on the rise, as local police have their hands tied, and must catch and release repeat offenders.

Prop 20 would make specific types of theft and fraud crimes, including firearm theft, vehicle theft, and unlawful use of a credit card, chargeable as misdemeanors or felonies, rather than misdemeanors. The ballot initiative would also establish two additional types of crimes in state code—serial crime and organized retail crime—and charge them as wobblers. Prop 20 would require persons convicted of certain misdemeanors that were classified as wobblers or felonies before 2014, such as shoplifting, grand theft, and drug possession, along with several other crimes, including domestic violence and prostitution with a minor, to submit to the collection of DNA samples for state and federal databases. It would require a parole review board to consider additional factors, such as the felon's age, marketable skills, attitude about the crime, and mental condition, as well as the circumstances of the crimes committed, before deciding whether to release a felon on parole. The ballot initiative would allow prosecutors to request a review of the board's final decision. The ballot initiative would also define 51 crimes and sentence enhancements as violent in order to exclude them from the parole review program.

YES - Proposition 22 - Help App-based Drivers Return to Work and Increase State Revenues.

How can you lose? AB 5 passed in 2019 established a three-factor test to determine if a worker is an independent contractor or an actual employee. Already there are over 100 exemptions to the law - which means it is a bad law, but may have been a great fundraiser for some politicians. However, the law still remains for some key businesses that have flexible work hours, such as app-based drivers.

Prop 22 would override AB 5 and consider app-based drivers to be independent contractors and not employees. Examples of companies that hire app-based drivers include Uber, Lyft, and DoorDash. Prop 22 would not affect

how AB 5 is applied to other types of workers, many who have been exempted since AB5 was passed. Prop 22 would also enact labor and wage policies specific to app-based drivers and companies, including a net earnings floor based on 120 percent of the state's or municipality's minimum wage and 30 cents per mile; a limit to the hours permitted to work during a 24-hour period; healthcare subsidies; occupational accident insurance; and accidental death insurance. Prop 22 would require the companies to develop anti-discrimination and sexual harassment policies. If these people could return to work, in a manner that suits their needs, it would increase in state personal income tax revenue.

Other Ballot Initiatives:

Senator Melissa Melendez often sets the record straight – I have included her recommendations for the remaining initiatives, which is brief and to the point:

PROP 14 - NO

The state created its own stem cell agency in 2006 because the federal government placed a ban on federal funding of stem cell research, which is no longer in place. The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine is now running out of money. This proposition would issue bonds to keep the Agency operating; the cost of those bonds to taxpayers will be an estimated \$7.8 billion. So far none of the funded experimentation has reached the market, and it has yet to finance a stem cell therapy that is available to the general public.

As stated, the federal government no longer bans funding for this research. Additionally, the Agency has had some serious conflict of interest issues with some members profiting handsomely from their positions on the board, and the board has absolutely no legislative oversight.

PROP 15 - NO

Massive tax increase. Changes Prop 13 by increasing property taxes on businesses. Those same businesses that are currently struggling to stay alive in a state that has ordered them closed for months. This is an all out assault on Prop 13. This time around, they're going after commercial property. Next time around, it will be your house.

PROP - 16 - NO

In 1996 voters passed Prop 209 outlawing the use of affirmative action when deciding who gets certain job or gets into college. This proposition asks voters to reverse their 1996 decision and put affirmative action back in place. This is legalized discrimination, which Californians already rejected, and should do so again.

PROP 17 - NO

This allows people on parole to vote and run for office. Currently, voting rights are restored to people who have committed a crime once they have completed their time in incarceration and any parole or probation assigned.

This Prop restores those rights before time on parole/probation has been completed. Those on parole are given a task; show that you are willing to obey the law and that you've reformed.

Violent offenders should have to successfully complete parole before having the right to vote on criminal justice laws.

PROP 18 - NO

This Prop allows 17-year-olds to vote in primary and special elections if they will be 18 and eligible by the next general election.

It will also allow 17-year-olds who qualify to vote under this proposition to run for office.

17-year-olds are still kids; they're still in high school, doing what kids their age do.

The age to drink is 21, age to get a tattoo is 18, age to use a tanning bed is 18, and age to get a credit card is 18. Let's let kids mature a bit more before voting on laws they likely don't understand yet.

PROP 19 - NO

Two years ago nearly the same exact proposition was flatly rejected by voters. Modifies Prop 13 by allowing homeowners older than 55 to transfer their current property taxes rate to a new home anywhere in the State within two years of selling their previous house.

But, if your kids inherit the home after you die, they will have to move into it; otherwise the property taxes go up, which may mean having to sell it because they can't afford the new tax rate.

PROP 21 - NO

Voters said NO to this idea just a few years ago, yet here we are again.

This Prop Allows local governments to enact rent control on residential properties that are 15 years or older, meaning the governments will decide how much rent you can charge for your property.

PROP 23 - NO

This was on the ballot a few years ago, voters said NO. But the unions are persistent.

This Prop targets dialysis clinics. The unions want clinic workers to be part of the union. The clinic workers said no thank you we're happy the way we are. The union didn't like that answer, so they threatened to bankrupt the clinics with costly ballot propositions they'd have to fight. They made good on their promise as this is the second time voters will see the on the ballot.

PROP 24 - NO

When you read this Prop, it sounds pretty good. When you dig into the details, no so much. It keeps employees from finding out what information their

employers collect on them.

It also puts into place a mechanism that allows businesses to charge you more if you don't let them sell your data. And big tech companies are free to collect all your data when you leave the state. So much for privacy.

PROP 25 - NO

In 2018 the legislature passed a bill, SB10, that prohibited requiring cash bail. Supporters say having to pay bail is racist. Opponents say it's the only way to insure a person shows up for their court date.

Recommended Local Candidates:

I support and in many instances, have endorsed, the following candidates for election in local races in South Orange County due to their support for and by public safety, their involvement in the community, and if they are an incumbent, their city's financial picture:

Aliso Viejo City Council (2 seats): Mike Munzing and Michael Winger

Dana Point City Council: Mike Frost and Michael Villar

Laguna Hills City Council (2 seats): Janine Heft and Bill Hunt

Laguna Niguel City Council (3 seats): Sandy Rains, Kelly Jennings, Rischi Sharma

Laguna Woods City Council: Kathryn Robbins

Lake Forest City Council (2 seats): Doug Cirbo and Rob Pequeno

Mission Viejo City Council (2 seats): Trish Kelley, Brian Goodell

Rancho Santa Margarita (2 seats): Tony Beall and Carol Gamble

San Clemente City Council (3 seats): Aaron Washington, Steve Knoblock, Charlie Smith

San Juan Capistrano City Council (2 seats): Howard Hart; Sergio Farias is unopposed)

Thanks for reading, feel free to pass along and please check out my website or email me at diane@dianeharkey.com for more information. Get out and enjoy your life - it's not a dress rehearsal!

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