



RICARDO A. SAMANIEGO

El Paso County Judge

October 22, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: El Paso COVID-19 Crisis

Dear Governor Abbott,

As you are aware, El Paso is experiencing an enormous surge of COVID-19 cases. Today, for the first time, we reported over 1000 new cases. Our positivity rate is 14.86% and our hospitalization rate is 27%. El Paso is facing an unprecedented crisis.

Our local hospitals have worked collaboratively and effectively during the pandemic but their resources are limited. As our numbers surge, however, it is clear that more assistance will be needed. I am aware that efforts were made to request the use of William Beaumont Hospital to address the surge of COVID-19 cases. I urge you to push for the approval of William Beaumont Hospital as a resource for treating COVID-19 patients.

During the October 12, 2020 press conference here in El Paso, you indicated that local elected officials are empowered to do what we need to do to stem the rise of the virus. Please be advised that today I have exercised my authority to close County parks and we are asking residents to minimize all travel outside their homes, limit the number of household residents who visit grocery stores, retail stores and restaurants.

If these temporary measures are not effective, I intend to impose further restrictions. I may be seeking your support of more restrictive measures. The County and the City have remained unified in its approach to this crisis. It is vitally important, however, that I be included in all discussions involving decisions that affect El Paso. It is equally important that our local delegation and Congresswoman Escobar likewise be invited to the table to discuss solutions. This is an emergency situation and all our local leaders must be consulted. I respectfully request that I be included in your discussions with city officials. I am appreciative of the assistance El Paso has received and I look forward to continued discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ricardo A. Samaniego". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Ricardo A. Samaniego
El Paso County Judge