

For Immediate Release

March 13, 2020

From: Office of County Judge Joe Weber

To the Citizens of Fayette County:

It has been and continues to be a privilege to serve as your Fayette County Judge, both in good times and in challenging times. Today, our Country, its States and our local communities face some severe challenges. I have spent the majority of this day out personally assessing our County's response to the Coronavirus issues affecting all of us. I am pleased to say, and not at all surprised, that the response of our County employees, our local health providers, specifically our St. Mark's Hospital as well as our nursing homes and assisted living facilities, has been nothing short of serious and professional. They are prepared to address the health concerns for all within our County. They are doing the right things!

I do not make decisions on what I do not know or on what others have done. I make them on what I know, and what I believe to be in the best interests of Fayette County residents. I have stated that I would not make potentially "disruptive" decisions with respect to the Coronavirus without what I have referred to as a "game changer". Upon communications & coordination with many of our community leaders and local health authorities, I believe we have that "game changer". Though we have no confirmed cases of Coronavirus in our County, thus fortunately no loss of life, I cannot and will not put any of our County health providers in a position to be potentially overloaded by large numbers of people seeking medical attention, a good number of which might not really need it, but out of fear and uncertainty might believe they do. Our County medical providers are here and willing to provide emergency medical care to anyone in need, and do so willingly. But their first and foremost responsibility is to be able to provide both standard and emergency care to our County residents. Large groups gathered in our County from around the Country and Internationally have the potential to put a significant strain on our health providers particularly with the Coronavirus issues we are having right now.

As I have visited our nursing homes and assisted living centers, it's evident that our County is blessed to have a large number of senior citizens, many cannot care for themselves and so depend on our County health providers to attend to them, and they do so magnificently. Protecting our elderly, truly the most vulnerable at this point time, and their attendees is of great concern to me. We have to reduce exposure to them any way we can.

With all said, and based on the recent declaration of a State of Disaster for all Counties in Texas by Governor Abbott, and the recent declaration of a National Emergency by our President – with the power invested in me as Fayette County Judge I am officially declaring a Local Disaster and officially cancelling any and all activities and events associated with the 2020 Fayette County Antique Fair & Show. I am not happy at all to do this. With respect to the other events scheduled in our County, some of which I'm probably not aware, I strongly encourage the sponsors or owners to weigh heavily on the same factors and rationale I have alluded to in making decisions as to continue with their activities or not.

The coronavirus will not be completely contained, it will spread, the incredibly good news is that the vast majority of us who may get it will survive and will continue to live normal and healthy lives. I charge you all to meet the challenge that Coronavirus is something we are going to learn to have to live with, not die with. Our County, State and Federal health providers are the best in the world and they will protect and care for us. Our Nation's economy remains the envy of the world and will recover.

Finally, I would ask all our County residents to avoid "panic" buying at our local stores. It is absolutely NOT necessary, and sadly puts many of those in need of such items on a daily basis, particularly hygienic in nature, in a very bad situation. Please take what you need, but respect what your other fellow residents need as well. By supporting and respecting the needs of each other, much needed essential supplies can be available to all. And Please refer to our Fayette County website ([www.co.fayette.tx.us](http://www.co.fayette.tx.us)) for all future information, guidance, and County activities.

May God continue to bless our great United States of America, Texas, and our beloved Fayette County. Thank you all.