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Idaho's economic rebound hinges on the safety and confidence of consumers and employees

By Governor Brad Little

As more and more businesses are opening their doors, many Idahoans have been eager to get out of the house and get back to work.

I'm grateful to see my friends and neighbors feeling confident about returning to work and visiting businesses again.

But there remain many other Idahoans with earnest concern about the effect coronavirus could have on them and their families.

Close to half a million Idaho adults are considered at-risk of developing severe complications from coronavirus. That's more than one-third of our adult population.

Health and the economy are not mutually exclusive – they are interconnected.

We cannot rebound if a huge segment of our population is afraid to engage in the economy again.

They will engage, however, if they feel safe going outside their homes to visit businesses and return to work.

We all have a role to play in keeping them safe.

Our personal actions are the most effective way to manage the virus and get our economy roaring again. Wear a face covering in public, keep at least six feet of physical distance from others, keep hands and surfaces clean, and stay home if you're sick.

Many businesses and employers are protecting their workers and customers by practicing these measures.

Even if contracting COVID-19 is low on your list of personal concerns, I urge you to still do these things. Prosperity and safety are linked. Protecting other citizens is the right thing to do, and our economic rebound depends on it.

Folks also need to know they should go to their health care provider for other medical issues. Please, don't put off care because of concerns about COVID-19. In many cases, longer delays in care will worsen outcomes for patients. Hospitals, healthcare facilities, clinics, and doctors have the protections in place to treat you safely and appropriately.

Idaho was one of the last states in the country with a confirmed coronavirus case. We were one of the first states to create a safe, responsible plan to reopen the economy in stages. President Trump, Vice President Pence, and White House officials repeatedly have praised Idaho's staged approach and our handling of federal relief funds in prioritizing support for small businesses.

The one and only reason we're able progress through the stages of reopening is because the people of Idaho – individually and collectively – have taken personal responsibility in slowing the spread of this new disease.

We are better off in Idaho than elsewhere not because the problem doesn't exist, but because we're doing a good job protecting our family, neighbors, and friends.

We cannot let up. We control the outcome. We control our ability to make consumers and employees confident about going back to work and visiting places of business. Our personal choices matter.

Thank you to the people of Idaho for your determination during these tough times and the care you have shown others.

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