



MEDIA RELEASE

DATE **December 29, 2020**

Contact: Commissioner Amanda McKinney
509-424-0043 or amanda.mckinney@co.yakima.wa.us

“BOCC Response to COVID-19 Outbreak at Union Gap Costco”

YAKIMA, WA- The Yakima Board of County Commissioners would like to acknowledge the COVID-19 outbreak at the Union Gap Costco facility recently investigated by the Yakima Health District. The Interim Health Officer and Director have determined the store may remain open, concluding it does not pose an increased threat of COVID-19 transmittal to the public. Their decision cites they have confirmed Costco is in compliance with uniform best practices established by the CDC, Washington State Department of Health and Yakima Health District.

While the County Commissioners agree with this decision, we cannot help but see the double standard so unfairly applied in plain view of the public in which one business is allowed to thrive because it uses common sense uniform best practices, while others are simply not allowed the opportunity to try. Governor Inslee’s continued nonsensical policy of labeling “essential” and “non-essential” businesses can today be judged definitively as an egregious and misguided policy, which it has been since its inception. Our local Costco store can remain safely open despite a known outbreak, and yet our schools, restaurants, gyms, theaters, and other businesses cannot.

EVERY business and organization should have equal opportunity to gain the trust of the consumer to utilize their services. The continued use of uniform best practices has significantly contributed to the low number of Hospital staff who have contracted COVID while administering care to those who are infected. The Board of County Commissioners believes that uniform best practices can and must be uniformly applied to all manners of business and gatherings and are necessary for the well-being of our entire community as we continue to learn to live with COVID-19. As the Board of County Commissioners, we continue to be concerned with all the effects of COVID-19, including the health of our residents AND the effects of COVID-19 restrictions and shutdowns.

####