

Stephen C. Bannon, Chair
Edward Abrahams
William Cooke
Kate Burke
Leigh Davis



Town Hall, 334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Telephone: (413) 528-1619 x2
Fax: (413) 528-2290

TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

SELECTBOARD

November 2, 2020

Dr. Martin Kulldorff
Dr. Sunetra Gupta
Dr. Jay Bhattacharya
American Institute for Economic Research
250 Division Street
Great Barrington MA 01230-1000

Dear Dr. Kulldorff, Dr. Gupta, and Dr. Bhattacharya,

Recently, the American Institute for Economic Research has made international headlines with your publication of the "Great Barrington Declaration." It is in response to this declaration that we, the Great Barrington Selectboard, are writing to express our disagreement with the ideas expressed therein. We believe they run counter to our town's collective value system, namely caring for and protecting the vulnerable in our community. Your co-opting of our town's name in the title of your declaration, whether intentional or not, is exploitative and unwelcome for reasons which are stated further in this letter.

The set of policy positions you are advancing, which favor short-term economic gains over public health and safety, are an affront to our citizens' difficult sacrifices. You mock our town's efforts to maintain safety measures and undermine the heroic endeavors of our community's healthcare workers, including those at our beloved Fairview Hospital (recognized as one of America's Top Rural Hospitals). We are proud to have one of the lowest infection rates in the state, and your theory runs counter to our precautions. So far, COVID-19 has killed over one million people and infected more than 40 million. Let the record show that we emphatically disagree that spreading more disease is the solution to the COVID pandemic.

Furthermore, your declaration ignores the growing evidence on long-COVID, whereby thousands of young and healthy people who contract the virus are left with debilitating symptoms months after a mild infection. Your premise dismisses the views of Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, as well as those of Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of the World Health Organization. They have stated that herd immunity is "scientifically and ethically problematic," "very dangerous" and "total nonsense."

Great Barrington, as a community, has listened to these experts and remains committed to following the recommended COVID-19 safety protocols. Your declaration's complete dismissal of the experts and their advice has caused many of our residents considerable alarm. In addressing this concern, as well as the unwanted media attention your declaration has received, we, as a board of elected officials, wish to clearly repudiate your philosophy. We would like to assure the public at large that your beliefs are in no way sanctioned by the Town of Great Barrington, nor was the use of our town name.

Sincerely,

Steve Bannon, Selectboard Chair

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Edward Abrams

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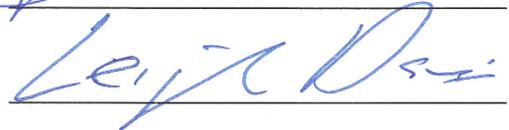
William F. Cooke

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Kate Burke

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Kate", written above a horizontal line.

Leigh Davis

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