

The current virus crisis will have both predictable and unknown consequences. Aside from the impact of infection on public health straining the ability of our medical system to respond, it is imperative that local state and federal government coordinate efforts to contain the widespread economic impact. Flash cash payouts in my view will be only a short term Band-Aid. A more strategic approach will be to freeze or pause payments on mortgages, leases, and rentals. This approach will be most far reaching, have the greatest benefit, and allow the community to rally once the crisis is contained. It will also reduce the need for massive bail outs that will otherwise be eventually transferred to the consumer. I strongly urge you to take action by submitting these ideas for legislation and enact them as soon as possible. As a small business owner whose activity has already been reduced by over 50%, I can personally vouch for the benefits of this approach. And I consider myself one of the lucky ones to be able to do any business at all. With respect to the necessary medical response, I advocate for the national guard and other emergency response systems to put in place mobile temporary medical shelters and units to increase bed space. These could actually be converted to homeless shelters in the future once the need for treatment surrounding the virus subsides.

In support of a rational response,

Michael Alter
Portland OR