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Councilor Sal Peralta

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Chair Holvey and members of the Committee,

My name is Sal Peralta. I am a City Councilor in McMinnville and Vice Chair of the Mid-Valley Council of Governments. I would like to thank the members for your excellent work to prioritize legislative action with regard to the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

Prior to today's (3/23) lunch recess, several Senators expressed a desire to identify things that can have a big impact that can be addressed through legislation and carry no cost.

For the past two weeks, I have been contacting various lobbyists and lawyers for grocery stores and big box retailers encouraging them to take additional "best practice steps" to better protect their employees.

Especially given the heightened role that grocers and big box retailers will play during this crisis, providing clear state guidelines to grocers and other big box retailers to protect public health would help slow the transmission of the virus, protect the health and safety of grocery workers, and promote public confidence in our commercial retail sector.

I would like your committee to consider implementing some variation of one of the following policy concepts:

- 1) ADOPT CRUISE SHIP RULES FOR GROCERS -- Every passenger who boards a cruise ship or who enters a space where food will be handled on a cruise ship is greeted by a person with a spray bottle filled with sanitizing spray – some combination of alcohol and soap -- to ensure hands are disinfected and reduce the risk of virus transmission through surface infection.

These guidelines were adopted to reduce industry liability and promote passenger safety due to previous virus outbreaks on cruise ships. These will be essential as supply chain disruptions for cleaning supplies like isopropyl-70 and masks are expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Given the persistence of COVID-19 on surfaces, especially metal and plastic¹, this seems like a very straightforward way to reduce the transmission of viruses that has been proven out by the industry that has had the most experience dealing with these kinds of outbreaks.

- 2) Similar concept to 1: Provide guidelines encouraging or requiring large retailers to take a digital temperature of all patrons entering a store and encouraging those that throw a temp to self-isolate and/or get tested, once tests are widely available. This could also be implemented by county health departments.

¹ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.03.09.20033217v2.full.pdf>



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Both of these approaches are based on the “Singapore Clean Campaign” (<https://www.sgclean.gov.sg/>) that was launched by Singapore’s Health Authority in February, 2020.

Singapore currently has one of the lowest rates of spread for COVID-19 in the world despite being a cosmopolitan city. I would encourage members of this committee to ask your staffs to review the both the “Singapore Clean” campaign and guidelines for retailers ² (please read linked footnote below) for ideas on best practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

As a local elected official who also serves on a Council of Governments whose purpose is to encourage greater collaboration between government units, I firmly believe that a single coherent statewide policy is better than a patchwork of local policies.

However, if OHA or this body does not take additional steps to ensure public health at supermarkets, it would not surprise me to see multiple local jurisdictions in the Mid-Willamette Valley and other parts of the state take further action on their own.

Thanks again for your public service to the state, and especially for your work helping Oregon to manage this crisis.

Sal Peralta

McMinnville City Councilor
Vice Chair, Mid-Valley Council of Governments

² <https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/media-centre/media-releases/2020/march/advisory-on-safe-distancing-at-retail-establishments>