

HB3177

It is a sad day that we come to this. The need to submit testimony in order to get a bill passed that would require less action from our Governor.

I am a 62 year old fitness instructor. I am certified to teach group fitness classes and Better Bones and Balance © classes to older adults. I have lived my adult life as one who is concerned with healthy aging.

When the evidence indicated that the Covid-19 virus had in fact made its way to Oregon, I did not feel afraid for my health. I had worked at protecting my health and encouraging and teaching others how to protect theirs. So, this was everything I had prepared for. Suddenly, the Governor of the State of Oregon determined that She knew better how to protect me and keep me out of the healthcare system.

I understood closing schools and bars and restaurants and any other place where people gathered in large close groups, until we had a better understanding of how this virus was being spread. I did not understand closing boat ramps, beaches, campgrounds, hiking and walking trails and other outdoor venues. Even parks where we could safely exercise outdoors were closed.

I tried teaching a class online. Most older adults are not able to handle an online class and the class was not successful. Better Bones and Balance © is a tried and true curriculum that has been highly successful and that I have taught for over 13 years.

It was apparent that the government was in panic mode. Panic means ignorance and no rational plan of action. As a martial artist this type of reaction made no sense to me. Closing the gyms and other outdoor areas for exercise and other means of maintaining good health seemed counter-productive to everything we knew about keeping ourselves healthy; at any age.

Over the past year we have seen, studied and have a much better understanding about how this virus spreads, who is the most vulnerable and the ability of most people who do get infected to survive without treatment. We also have statistics to know the very low mortality rate associated with this virus. It is time to give the power and control, back to the people who know best how to keep themselves and their families safe.

Gyms and restaurants are locations that are always required to use good sanitation in their environment and areas that customers encounter. They are probably some of the cleanest environments. The Health department inspects them regularly and the State already has an influence on their cleanliness.

It is time to let these locations open back up. Let people return to managing their good health. It is time to show some faith in the citizens of the State, we know how to protect ourselves.

Amy Hartney-Strader