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Dear Friends,

As you can tell by the news, we have a dangerous situation in Ohio with the coronavirus. We are very concerned about community spread, which just means we are seeing cases of people with the virus, where we can't determine where they got it.

Undoubtedly, there are several Ohioans who have it, but don't know it. The death rate goes up dramatically with age -- the older someone is, the higher the mortality rate, as you can see by what is happening in Washington state.

I have been candid and tried to explain the threat. I am sending this letter to community leaders to emphasize the danger and to repeat what I have said in public in the hope that you will help me get the word out.

Our whole goal is to drastically limit personal contact. Below is a list of things you can do to help prevent the spread of disease. These actions **WILL** save lives:

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water several times a day. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home while you are sick (except to visit a health care professional) and avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces each day. Use a household cleaner according to label instructions.
- Avoid large gatherings.
- Use online transactions when possible.
- Avoid visiting nursing homes -- and if you are sick, do NOT visit nursing homes.
- If you have an older person in your home or someone with compromised health, such as asthma, understand that the biggest threat to them may be you bringing the virus into the home.
- If you or a loved one are older, think twice about an upcoming trip.

Additional information can be found at our website www.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Also, if you have questions, call our Department of Health hotline at 1-833-4ASK-ODH.

Please get the word out! Nothing matters more right now than taking these steps to prevent the further spread of this disease. I am grateful for all that you can do to help us save lives.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Governor