

For Immediate Release: Thursday March 19th, 2020

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FLAGSTAFF DSA DEMANDS IMMEDIATE ACTION IN COCONINO COUNTY

What: The following is a list of requirements to protect our community, for all elected/appointed officials of Coconino County and the City of Flagstaff.

Who: Flagstaff Democratic Socialists of America

When: Immediately

Where: Flagstaff, Arizona

#FLAGSTAFFDSA #DSA #COVID19 #CORONAVIRUS

Flagstaff, AZ -- As COVID-19 lays bare the inequities inherent to our economic system, it exposes how much of our current social arrangement is fiction. We need to ACT NOW to ensure that we continue to build a more resilient community, throughout and beyond the duration of this crisis. This disease knows no borders. We are only as healthy as the sickest among us. Our community is only as safe as the most vulnerable community on Earth.

On March 18th, 2020, Coconino Board Chair Lena Fowler signed a proclamation closing county establishments effective March 19th to April 1st. No proclamation from the county or the city has outlined how everyday people will pay for food, rent, utilities, and necessities come April 1st and the months to follow. We do not expect this crisis to end soon, and the severity is likely to increase. Like nationally, many households in our area do not have the money needed to withstand these emergency times.

As a community, we must keep responding to each other's needs and providing the support we require. At this moment, we demand all of the following actions to ensure our safety, support our health, and build a just community:

- 1. Suspension of all residential and commercial rents, property taxes, and mortgages in addition to a moratorium on all evictions and foreclosures:** Halting evictions is not enough as it will only further the debt load for working people for months to come. If rents are not suspended, we call on individuals and businesses to engage in a collective rent strike.
- 2. Suspension on all payments for utilities:** The City of Flagstaff must utilize its emergency funds to cover the costs of water, sewage and trash for all residents.

3. **The City of Flagstaff and Coconino County need to ensure that nobody in our community loses access to essential services:** This requires coordination with the Arizona Corporation Commission and all other utility companies, such as APS, Unisource, Suddenlink, CenturyLink, etc.. We demand a guarantee that none of these essential services will be turned off.
4. **Equal protection for all in our community:** No City or County assistance provided and/or established to address the current crisis will be denied to any member of our community because of immigration status or criminal background.
5. **Protect our most vulnerable:** All policies that criminalize unsheltered people must be immediately suspended, with support and protection offered.
6. **Prevent transmission among incarcerated people:** Due to the risk of deadly disease spread in unsanitary confined locations, the county jail must release as many offenders as possible. This includes elderly folks, individuals being held for ICE, and all people awaiting bail. Cite and release practices should be immediately adopted, and the practice of cash bail ended. City and county attorneys should utilize all opportunities to reduce the number of incarcerated people.
7. **Utilize all city infrastructure:** The closing of NAU and the stop of tourism changes how our city should use its infrastructure. Government buildings, unoccupied hotel and motel rooms, sports centers, and school gymnasiums can be turned into emergency housing for unsheltered community members and all who are in need of safe shelter or self quarantine.
8. **Protect frontline medical workers and service/retail workers:** Due to the increased risk and danger, we demand that the city require emergency equipment, supplies, and hazard pay for all medical and emergency workers as well as for all grocery, convenience store, hotel, restaurant, janitorial, delivery and sanitation workers.
9. **Allocate city money and resources to protect our communities health and safety:** The city must release its emergency money to build needed medical emergency resources in conjunction with the hospital and Coconino County Health and Human Services. In addition, the city needs to direct 25% of the police budget to spend on medical emergency equipment and public health.

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