

Trump's Failure to Lead Has Put Rural Communities in Wisconsin at Risk

Written by Priorities Wisconsin, Cassidy Geoghegan
Monday, 27 April 2020 14:36

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/door-county-people-s5.jpg>



President Trump's refusal to implement widespread coronavirus testing poses a major threat to Wisconsin's rural communities, and Trump's failed response to the crisis has been devastating to farmers.

MADISON - On April 10, Trump was asked about reopening the government without having a national testing system, something experts agree is a non-starter. His answer, which went against advice from public health professionals, was particularly harmful to rural communities.

When speaking about states with smaller populations, Trump [said](#) :



"You don't need testing there, you know, where you have a state with a small number of cases."

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"So when you have that, you don't need testing. You don't have to test every person in the state of Iowa, as an example. You don't have to test every single person to say, 'Let's open up and let's get the tractors moving, and let's get the corn,' and let's open up all of the different things they do in that great state. You don't need that."

[According](#) to experts, the U.S. "cannot safely reopen unless it conducts more than three times the number of coronavirus tests it is currently administering." This means testing everyone, not just people in densely populated areas.

Unfortunately, it's not just Trump's refusal to implement widespread testing that poses a major threat to Wisconsin's rural communities. The damage done by coronavirus — and Trump's failed response to the crisis — has been devastating to Wisconsin's farmers.

Already vulnerable after a devastating few years due to Trump's trade war, the pandemic and ensuing economic slowdown [could result](#) in hundreds of millions of dollars in losses for farmers. Due to demand for dairy products going down the drain, farmers are being forced to dump their milk, and bankruptcies are [on the rise](#).

But unlike previous financial hardships for farmers, this time those economic concerns are coupled with health worries. And even though the president keeps saying they are less likely to contract the virus due to low population densities, the coronavirus has officially reached [more than two-thirds](#) of the country's rural counties.

Rural communities tend to be older, less affluent, less likely to have [health insurance](#) and [less healthy](#) than the national average. This includes folks with heart disease, diabetes, and asthma — all risk factors for the novel coronavirus, [according](#) to Roger Ray, a retired neurologist.

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According to [TIME](#), "Research from the University of Minnesota's Rural Health Research Center has also shown that while rural residents are more likely than their urban counterparts to suffer from certain respiratory problems, they are less likely to have quick access to a hospital with potentially life-saving ventilators."

So if these communities get hit with an outbreak of coronavirus cases, do rural care health care facilities even have the [capacity](#) to handle said outbreak? Will health care workers be warned of an outbreak with such limited testing?

Until [testing ramps up](#), Wisconsin's rural communities will be walking in the dark. These are unprecedented times, but the Trump administration owes it to our communities — urban and rural alike — to do all he can to help us get out of this crisis.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to speak to a Wisconsinite who can speak to these issues more fully.

Best,

Cassidy

Resources:

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[Wisconsin's Race To Roll Out More COVID-19 Tests, Despite Shortages Of 'Everything'](#)

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[Wisconsin largely avoids rural hospital closures, but faces challenges](#)

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[Counties without coronavirus are mostly rural, poor](#)

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[Tests Run Short and Results Come Slow in Coronavirus-Stricken Rural Communities](#)

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[Rural Americans Are Vulnerable to the Coronavirus](#)

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[The coronavirus may hit rural America later — and harder](#)

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[American Farmers Were Already Hurting. Now the Coronavirus Slowdown Might Do Them In](#)