

TOWN OF NORTH ANDOVER
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
120 MAIN STREET
NORTH ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS 01845

Chris Nobile, Chairman
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October 5, 2020

Governor Charles Baker
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

We wanted to start by thanking you and your team for all your support over the past few weeks as we navigated the COVID-19 cluster at Merrimack College. As the host community for the college, it has certainly been a daunting task and the assistance from DPH and the Lt. Governor's Office helped the Town to work through how to best handle this unfortunate situation.

We are writing today to request that you reconsider using the "red" classification as the metric for moving to Phase 3 Step 2, and consider carving obvious clusters in universities and colleges out of Town numbers moving forward.

On September 30, the Town of North Andover was designated as a higher risk (red) community on the COVID-19 Community Data map. Of the cases listed for the Town, 93 cases were affiliated with Merrimack College and 16 cases were residents not affiliated with the college. ***Without the Merrimack College cases, the Town would have an incident rate of 3.8 percent and be categorized as a green (lower risk) community.***

The cluster at Merrimack College, which originated in the Monican Dorm in Andover and is outside of North Andover's jurisdiction, caused the Town's numbers to spike due to all of the cases being assigned to North Andover. Evidence has shown that due to the fast action of the college, there is no community spread from the cluster. Today the Town of North Andover has 52 active cases with 33 cases affiliated with the college.

Despite all of these factors, as community leaders, we are concerned that our Town will be unable to move forward to Phase Three Step 2 due to being deemed as a higher risk community. Our businesses have suffered over the past few years, first due to the impact of Columbia Gas and then due to the impacts of Covid-19, and now are further being impacted due to a cluster of cases with no evidence of community spread. There are 43 businesses directly impacted by the higher risk designation.

Again we respectfully request that you reconsider using the “red” classification as the metric for moving to Phase 3 Step 2, and consider carving obvious clusters in universities and colleges out of Town numbers moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Nobile". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background behind it.

Chris Nobile

Chairman

North Andover Board of Selectmen

Cc: Senator Diana DiZoglio
Representative Christina Minicucci
Representative Tram Nguyen