

John George
915 26th Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

June 24, 2020

Thomas J. LeBlanc, President
The George Washington University

Dear Dr. LeBlanc,

I am writing to share some observations about the campus reopening plans. Before doing so, I want to acknowledge that the COVID-19 virus has caused unprecedented disruption and stress locally and globally and I appreciate the efforts of the GW Hospital medical staff and many others who have been on the front line daily to help curb the impact of the pandemic. We are all in this together.

Regarding the reopening plan, I attended the GW Campus reopening presentation to ANC 2A members on Wednesday June 17, 2020 and have read The George Washington University Plan for Fall 2020 submitted on June 15, 2020 to the DC Office of Planning and Department of Health. I have also talked with several residents of Foggy Bottom neighborhood about the plan. We realize how challenging it must be to consider the various aspects of reopening and the significant amount of work from so many to think through these aspects. Thank you for taking time to do so. The GW University has an increased responsibility this year – to ensure a quality education for students as well as provide a safe and healthy environment for students, staff, and the community. I would like to comment on select areas of the plan and for the University to clarify details contained in the plan.

Required Public Health Measures: A significant number of GW students do not live on campus with many living in the Foggy Bottom/West End neighborhoods. The plan calls for everyone on campus to wear a cloth mask when in public areas or in the presence of others. It is important for students wear masks off campus in accordance with CDC recommendations and those implemented by the DC Government. Reports from residents indicate that this has already become an issue as many off-campus students are not adhering to the current guidelines. It will be important for the University to put additional expectations on all students including those living off-campus to adhere to University policies as if they were on campus.

Reducing the Density of Residence Halls and the On-Campus Population (including the Request for Temporary Relief from District Regulatory Requirements): It was not clear from the GW representative at the ANC meeting how many students are expected to enroll this fall and live on or off campus. In some locations off campus, the relationship between off campus students and Foggy Bottom/West End residents is strained, therefore, we encourage the University to house incoming students on-campus rather than seek additional accommodations off campus. It will be important for the University to encourage new freshmen to defer or engage in remote learning and for returning students to engage in remote learning rather than report to the physical campus. Limiting the number of students who need

on-campus accommodation would allow the University to meet capacity needs on-campus rather than requesting a "Temporary Relief" from on-campus housing requirement.

Limiting Gatherings: While I understand this category is meant for on-campus events such as lectures, concerts, sporting events, etc. it is important for the University to monitor and regulate off-campus events. Already this spring/summer, off-campus students have held large gatherings (i.e., parties) where large numbers of individuals have gathered, not practiced social distancing, nor have worn masks. The residents of Foggy Bottom/West End would like the University to address this issue.

Requesting Street Closures and Restrictions: I agree with certain on-street parking restrictions for social distancing practices in high-density pedestrian areas, but the Foggy Bottom/West End neighbor residents are concerned this will push vehicle parking further into the neighborhood where parking is already extremely difficult. Many of the residents in the neighborhood need available street parking as garages and driveways are limited. Consider using existing campus parking lots or public garages for University Staff, Hospital Staff and Students who must park a car and avoid parking in the historic district.

Quarantine and Isolation Measures: Reevaluate how you will handle quarantine of on-campus students and how you handle those off-campus students who meet the current definition of COVID-19. At the ANC meeting, your representative indicated that the quarantine facility would be off campus and in the community - this is unacceptable. Our community will not support a waiver to Condition P-1, prohibition on purchasing or leasing residential facilities off-campus. The University must reserve residence hall space, on-campus for this purpose. Moving sick students into the community and placing the community further at risk is unacceptable. The plan indicates that the University will monitor on-campus student's health, provide medical care, deliver meals and provide other assistance, however, the plan does not address those living off-campus other than to indicate they will be required to quarantine. The University is responsible for all students, not just those living on campus. Will the University not monitor off-campus students? Or not provide off-campus students with medical care or allow them to receive other services? Please reevaluate this section so that it accounts for all students as well as the community.

Thank you for your time and attention to these items. If you would like to reach me to discuss further, please call: 202-425-6046

Sincerely,

John P. George