

# U.S. SENATOR BEN CARDIN



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Dear Friend:

Some good news:

Infection rates and hospitalization rates related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) are going down in Maryland. State officials reported this week that the number of COVID-related hospital patients declined for [21 days straight](#) and the number of patients in the ICU for COVID has been stable.

Thanks to the collective actions of many and the conservative pace of reopening some of our largest jurisdictions, we've made progress and have lowered the state's [positivity rate to under six percent](#).

The bad news: The trends are not the same throughout the country.

According to data from the Johns Hopkins University, 10 states – [Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina and Texas](#) – are all seeing infection rates on the rise – in fact, they are experiencing their highest average of daily new Covid-19 cases since the pandemic started. Unfortunately, despite cases going in the opposite direction of the White House reopening guidelines that are pinned to two weeks of declining numbers, many of these states are rushing to reopen like the pandemic has vanished.

This lockdown has been tough and we all want to get back to a more normal routine. But we cannot simply wish this virus away or think we could ride it out if we get sick.

The United States has about 4.25% of the world's population yet we have more

than 1 in 4 cases of COVID-19. As of Friday (June 19), more than 2.2 million Americans have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus and over 118,000 have died. This is far more than the [estimated deaths](#) during a typical flu season and in half the time.

As Dr. Anthony Fauci told the Daily Beast earlier this week in an interview. "I don't like to talk about a second wave right now, because we haven't gotten out of our first wave."

So my message for you this week is: let's not squander the gains we have made. It has taken whole communities working together to keep each other safe and to help Maryland see a decrease in the infection rate. Businesses may open and, thankfully, Marylanders will start getting back to work, but as the risks remain, we must remain vigilant.

Keep wearing your mask in public. Wash your hands often. Try to avoid large indoor gatherings. Keep a safe distance from others, if possible. Testing is more widely available at this time, so if you think you have been exposed, get tested.

Hopefully, Maryland and other states who have (perhaps) been through the worst of COVID-19, can be an example to other states on how to work together to put the health and welfare of our people first. We can be an example of how to care for and show respect for the most vulnerable among us. We can keep our families and essential workers, first responders and health providers safe.

I know we will get through this public health crisis and economic crisis, but it will take time.

Keep safe and thank you for doing your part for Maryland.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben".

Ben Cardin

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