

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Pandemic - Pandemic Politics

July 1, 2020. We are in the midst of the most serious health crisis that has occurred in my lifetime. Instead of the country pulling together to overcome the disease, the virus itself has become politicized. The doctors have continued to instruct us to follow a simple set of precautions: socially distance; wear a mask; and wash your hands frequently. Then we have politicians saying to disregard the guidelines. What fools!

This is a presidential election year, so by default the President's perceived handling of the pandemic is going to be a major issue. In the past a national crisis has presented the incumbent with an advantage because the crisis usually elicits a "we are all in this together" national response. Think back to 2011 and how the American people rallied around the President, but that has not happened in this case because of a failure in leadership, particularly the way in which he has made the virus a political issue and promoted division rather than unity.

No one blames the President or any other American for the onslaught of the disease in this country, but the President backed himself into a corner early by trying to portray himself as the expert in how to deal with the matter, instead deferring to health experts. The President seemed more focused on ratings than uniting the country. Today the Red states and his supporters are operating under a different set of guidelines and exhibiting defiance all the while being encouraged by the President. At the same time a majority of citizens are socially distancing, wearing a mask, and washing hands frequently. And as he continues to follow the same ineffectual playbook, at some point soon it should become apparent to political advisors that his actions are jeopardizing his reelection.