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# Colorado is Not Ready for Phase One

Michaela Moore, Staff Reporter

Hi, it's me, your not-so-local reporter reporting from my home state of Colorado. I am disappointed to share that Colorado will begin "phase one" of opening the state back up, whatever that means. I think that Governor Jared Polis has done an excellent job when it comes to ensuring health and safety, but this is something that I cannot get behind.

Colorado's stay at home order is set to expire on April 26, when it will then transition into "Safer At Home" order on April 27 through May 4. Under Safer At Home, it is encouraged, rather than ordered, to stay at home and to only leave for essentials.

There are still not supposed to be gatherings of over ten people. The major difference is that retail can operate via curbside delivery and open with strict precautions, as well as tattoo shops and salons. The goal for Safer At Home is to achieve 60%-65% physical distancing.

Honestly though, the Safer At Home plan is not much different than staying at home, so it seems unfulfilling to call this a gradual reopening or phase one. Colorado has about 13,000 known cases of COVID-19, which pales in comparison to many other states, but it does not mean we are ready for the next step. People might see this as "the state is open," and I fear for what may happen next.

I have made a few Target and Walmart runs to get essential goods and I am stunned at the amount of loiterers in the clothing department, simply shopping in retail because they have the leisure time to do so or because they are bored in their houses. Clearly, people want out, and any slight decrease in public health guidelines gives people enough reason to celebrate and act like they are safe from the virus.

Opening up retail, even with strict precautions, means there will be more people out, perhaps walking downtown or waiting to get into the store of their choice. Salons are set to open on May 1. Again, this means more people going out. More people interacting with people outside of their home. More risk for contagion.

Governor Polis warned Coloradans that May will still be dangerous and to take the same precautions as April. However, I think that people will take the Safer At Home order lightly and Colorado will likely see a spike in cases after the salons and retail begins to open up. I applaud Denver's mayor, Michael Hancock, who has taken the extra precaution and extended the stay-at-home order through May 8.

I understand why the governor decided to begin slowly reopening the state because after all, the economy is important. However, lives are on the line. It may be too soon, and I don't want my state to go backwards on the progress that has been made.

