

Stephen C. Bannon, Chair  
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## TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

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### SELECTBOARD

October 26, 2020

Dr. Martin Kulldorff  
Dr. Sunetra Gupta  
Dr. Jay Bhattacharya  
American Institute for Economic Research  
250 Division Street  
Great Barrington MA 01230-1000

Dear Dr. Kulldorff, Dr. Gupta, and Dr. Bhattacharya,

Recently, the American Institute for Economic Research has made international headlines with your publication of the "Great Barrington Declaration." It is in response to this declaration that we, the Great Barrington Selectboard, are writing to express our unequivocal disapproval of the ideas expressed therein, as well as the despoiling of our town's good name. We feel co-opted and exploited by your efforts to promote ideas that run counter to our town's collective value system, namely caring for and protecting the vulnerable in our community.

We also have serious concerns that the notoriety you have courted will deter regular and future visitors who support our economy, just as we are equally concerned that your promotion of herd immunity will attract visitors who agree with its risky premise. Your declaration is an open invitation for tourists who eschew safety measures to visit our town and behave irresponsibly.

While we cannot be certain why your pro-herd immunity agenda was named for our town, it is clear that your decision to do so has damaged our reputation. The callousness of that decision mirrors the callousness at the heart of your philosophy. We denounce any association your manifesto brings to our town as it reveals a reckless disregard for our citizens, who have overwhelmingly expressed to us their opposition to it.

Your advancement of an amoral set of policy positions, which privilege short-term economic gains for the few over the long-term health and safety of the many, is an affront to our citizens' difficult sacrifices. You mock our town's efforts to maintain safety measures and undermine the heroic endeavors of our community's healthcare workers, including those at our beloved Fairview

Hospital (recognized as one of America's Top Rural Hospitals). We are proud to have one of the lowest infection rates in the state, and your theory runs counter to our precautions. So far, COVID-19 has killed over one million people and infected more than 40 million. Let the record show that the citizens of this town emphatically disagree that spreading disease is the solution to the COVID pandemic.

Furthermore, your declaration ignores the growing evidence on Long COVID, whereby thousands of young and healthy people who contract the virus are left with debilitating symptoms months after a mild infection. Your premise dismisses the views of Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, as well as those of Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of the World Health Organization. They have stated that herd immunity is "scientifically and ethically problematic," "very dangerous" and "total nonsense."

Your declaration has inflicted significant collateral damage on Great Barrington. Yet, with this letter, we hope the harm to our community's local and national reputation can be mitigated. Therefore, we, as a board of elected officials representing a community that does not share or sanction your beliefs, decisively repudiate your inhumane philosophy. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the citizens of our Town of Great Barrington in our condemnation of your manifesto.

Sincerely,

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Stephen Bannon, Chair

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Edward Abrahams, Vice-Chair

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Bill Cooke, Member

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Kate F. Burke, Member

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Leigh Davis, Member