Written by By Melissa Martin For the Sun
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"Democracy should not and need not be sacrificed in the name of public health."— Michael J. Abramowitz.

It's essential that citizens start listening less to the alarmist Anthony Fauci and more to other experts about COVID-19. We've heard the old saying: "There's two sides to every story and the truth is somewhere in the middle." Does this adage apply to COVID-19? Yes.

"As Heritage Foundation researchers have demonstrated throughout the pandemic, the spread of COVID-19 in the U.S. has been heavily concentrated in a small number of states—and among a small number of counties within states. Even though the U.S. has seen a rapid rise in cases during the last few weeks, the overall levels of concentration have remained fairly consistent." Visit www.heritage.org. As of July 14, 10 states accounted for 61 percent of all U.S. cases and 66 percent of all deaths (and 62 percent of the population.). Visit www.worldometers.info.

Should the entire country remain on lockdown?

I agree with Dr. Kevin Pham, medical physician. In a recent commentary for *The Daily Signal*, he surmised, "When the statewide lockdowns first began in response to the COVID-19

pandemic, most Americans accepted these measures in good faith as difficult, but necessary, sacrifices for the benefit of everyone. At the time, the only thing anyone truly understood about the novel coronavirus that causes the disease, was its breathtaking speed and seemingly unstoppable lethality in certain cities. But lockdown measures were meant only to bridge us to a solution for dealing with COVID-19, and it should be the goal of lawmakers to return as much of American life back to normal as possible." Visit www.dailysignal.com.

The National Coronavirus Recovery Commission, a project of The Heritage Foundation, has made 265 recommendations to return to business, saying, "This is a plan to save both our lives and our livelihoods. It is not about choosing between protecting lives or the economy, but about achieving the prudent balance needed to protect both." Visit www.coronaviruscommission.com.

Reopen our economy. Get Americans back to work. Lift restriction bans. Individuals with medical conditions and compromised immune systems must continue to take precautions. Encourage face coverings, but do not mandate masks. Give information and facts, but do not promote pandemic panic.

It is time to return our foundational freedom in churches, temples, synagogues, and places of worship. A return to civil liberties is imperative. And citizens must speak up and voice concern for religious freedoms. Lift restrictions on houses of worship. Pham asks, "After all, who cares more for the parishioners, the state's governor or the pastor?"

Reopen our schools. According to the House of Freedom Caucus, "Doctors and scientists have shown the minimal risk that COVID-19 poses to children and young adults, and state and local officials are compromising our young people's (sic) development by keeping schools closed over fear of COVID-19 … Our children should not have to pay for irrational and unprecedented actions to close our schools to in-person instruction." Visit the Official Facebook Page of the House Freedom Caucus.

Humanity has survived throughout the history of diseases. The Black Death hit Europe in 1347, and claimed 200 million lives in four years. The Great Plague of 1665 killed 100,000 Londoners in seven months. The Bubonic Plague claimed 15 million victims. In 1980, the World Health Organization announced the eradication of smallpox. Malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, influenza—and humanity is still around. H1N1, Ebola and Zika—and humanity is still around. On March 11, the World Health Organization announced that the COVID-19 virus was officially a pandemic—and humanity is still around.

To whom do we listen? Scientists, epidemiologists, physicians, nurses, researchers, historians, politicians, prophets. We check facts and discern false news. We listen to all, but stay somewhere in the middle. We use our common sense.

Republicans vs. Democrats. Will the real motivates pertaining to the COVID-19 response, please stand up—2020 is a presidential election year.

"Give me liberty, or give me death!"—Patrick Henry.

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