

To the Cochise County Board of Supervisors Regarding Refusal of Covid Relief Funding (22 February 2022)

My name is Michael Gregory. I've been a McNeal resident for 50 years.

For some fifteen of those years, I was director of Arizona Toxics Information, a non-profit research and advocacy organization for citizen right to know.

And for a time I was employed by the County as primary author of the County's Binational Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan, and for a time after that as Acting Emergency Services director.

All three jobs required that I be familiar with response and treatment capabilities for chemical, biological and other hazardous materials incidents, and that I help train response personnel.

In regard to Mr Crosby's remark on Agent Orange, I note that the correct comparison is not with vaccines, but with the Covid virus itself:

1. in their devastating effects on human health here and overseas;
2. in the way their toxicity and the science about them were from the beginning downplayed by the government;
3. in the ineptness and inadequacy of official public information about them; and
4. in government's mismanagement in the identification and caring for victims —

a mismanagement model that is now being replicated in the County's refusal of much-needed Covid Relief funding.

- Our schoolteachers, health care workers and other frontline workers have been saying for weeks that they are over-stressed and overworked and need help.
- Our hospitals have been clear about the need to upgrade our facilities.
- Our health officials have been equally clear that the County is very much in need of funding to make our response infrastructure adequate to address the problem in the pandemic present and in the endemic future.

For the Board to refuse this funding is to strike a blow against emergency planning and public health and to be derelict in their duty to protect the people of this county.