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Hon. Leward J. LaFleur
Marion County Judge

March 31, 2020

From the beginning of this situation we have done many things to be proactive on the COVID-19 pandemic and to keep you, the people of Marion County, informed. I vowed from the onset to do whatever was necessary to combat COVID-19.

Statistically, to our east in Louisiana there are over 200 confirmed cases in Caddo Parish alone. In Cass County there are now 4 cases. Harrison County has 4 cases. At this time in every county that touches us there is at least one confirmed case of COVID-19. Based on the way test results are reported, currently we do not have any cases in Marion County.

I have sought the recommendations of Jefferson Mayor Pro Tem Victor Perot, our Emergency Management Coordinator, Constable David Capps, the medical advice of health experts such as the Commissioner of Texas Health and Human Services Dr. John Hellerstedt, and our Texas Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd.

All of us here in Marion County have done an excellent job of following the Centers for Disease Control guidelines, as well as recommendations from State and National officials. This effort has helped minimize the spread into Marion County. I think we will continue to show Texas what Marion County is capable of when we're tested. The people here are our best resource and its very important to keep us safe.

Given that the largest portion of the population in Marion County is considered "at risk" of contracting the virus, I feel it is my duty to protect, with all the available recourses that are at my disposal, the people here in our community.

I am issuing a mandatory shelter in place effective 11:59p.m. today. This will remain in effect through April 30, in accordance with Governor Abbott's executive order. I will review all available information daily and, continue to update you as to the state of Marion County. It is my belief that the counties which surround us will be following our lead by issuing, or have already issued, mandatory shelter in place orders as well.

I know the impact of this, and I know in my heart that Marion County will continue to be a community which puts its people first, above everything else.

We are resilient. We are strong. We are compassionate. We are Marion County.

Please continue to pray for each other and our nation.

Respectfully,

Judge Leward J. LaFleur

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. J. LaFleur", is written over the typed name.