

Letters: Loveland police; Johns Hopkins ‘study’

February 12, 2022 at 6:44 a.m.

Report confirmed that overall, Loveland police are good

Thank you, former councilor Kathi Wright, for your remarks directed toward the mayor and Councilor Samson during public comment at Tuesday night’s council meeting. You’re absolutely right that the Jensen Hughes report confirmed what many of us know from our experiences with the Loveland Police Department — that overall, our police are good people who do the best they can in a wide variety of unpredictable circumstances. We shouldn’t be afraid to say that. The majority of the department deserved our support when bad officers acted dishonorably and cruelly. In situations like the Garner case, it’s vitally important that our elected officials, along with the public, wait for facts and not jump to conclusions or give hasty remarks about what should happen next.

After the Karen Garner story broke last year, everybody was justifiably horrified. The outcry for action was loud and unrelenting. There were City Council members, including Kathi Wright, who chose to wait for the investigation of the incident to run its course, despite being insulted and slandered. Wisdom tells us not to rush to speak on matters we don’t fully understand, even when (or especially when) emotions and pressure are running high. Thanks, Kathi, for the reminder.

There was no ‘Johns Hopkins study’

A recent caller to the RH Line claimed that Johns Hopkins did a study on lockdowns that concluded that they do not work. This is factually incorrect. Johns Hopkins University had nothing to do with the study. It was written by three economists, one of whom is a professor at Johns Hopkins and is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. The Cato Institute is a libertarian think tank.

What they did was not even a study. It was an unpublished, non-peer-reviewed, working paper that anyone could publish on the internet, and it was a meta-analysis of 34 other studies. Twelve of them were working papers, and 14 of them were written by economists who had no epidemiology backgrounds. Fox News and social media falsely characterized it as a John Hopkins study and claimed that the mainstream media ignored it, which they did for good reason.

The working paper and the caller claimed that lockdowns had no effect on public health. Their definition of a lockdown included simply wearing a mask. They cherry-picked studies and did not include all peer-reviewed studies that were relevant to the topic. Many of the most relevant studies on the impact of lockdowns were excluded. Lockdowns were started after the virus was rapidly spreading. Complications and deaths occurred much later. Consequently, one would not expect that the lockdowns would eliminate deaths but would only reduce their numbers.

The best marker is what happened in other countries who followed scientific guidelines, such as New Zealand, Taiwan, and South Korea, which had fewer deaths, and compare them to countries that strayed away from the science, such as the U.S. and Brazil. Even China had only around 5,000 deaths because of draconian lockdown measures that would be impossible to enforce in the U.S.

Had the Reporter-Herald properly vetted this comment, they would either have not printed it, or at least made an editorial comment about the misinformation.