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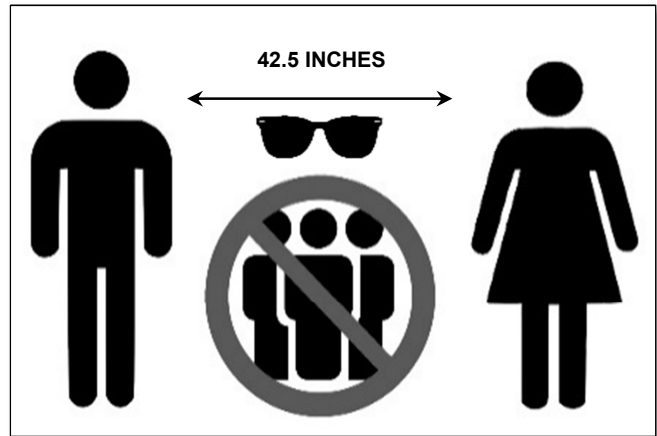
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BREAKING NEWS: GOVERNOR CLOSES STATE DUE TO BOLOGNA PLAGUE

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BUNKFORD FALLS – Governor Phineas Taylor announced today that he was shutting down restaurants, small businesses, and all churches, due to fears that the Bologna Plague would kill tens of thousands of state residents.

“Dr. Andrew Faux, Director of the Foundations for Illness Banishment (FIB), says that over two million Americans will die of the Bologna Plague,” said Taylor yesterday. “We must take precautions for our people,” he added, “so we are ordering all residents to stay in their homes until further notice. Government agencies will also be closed (although employees will still get paid), and the only businesses to stay open are the ones we say are ‘essential.’ And believe me, we know exactly which businesses are essential—we’ve been told by the FIB...I mean, uh, we’ve studied this key issue thoroughly.”

Taylor said that the FIB estimated that the Bologna Plague infection/fatality rate was 3.4 percent—approximately 30 times as deadly as the seasonal flu. “Sure, we’ve failed in our predictions for global warming, global cooling, ‘weapons of mass destruction,’ plastic straws, the ‘swine flu,’ and so on, but we’re sure that this time our prediction will be accurate,” said Faux. “I mean, it’s not like we’re going to try doing something like dishonestly counting deaths from other causes as Bologna Plague deaths—we’re positive at least two million will die in America.”

State residents have been ordered by Governor Taylor to (a) stop gathering in groups of more than 17 (or 18 if that group includes conjoined twins), (b) wear sunglasses and snorkels at all times when they’re outside, (c) stay at least 42.5 inches apart from each other, and (d) sanitize their hands every five minutes with flamethrowers.

“Well, uh...no, we didn’t actually pass a *law* to shut down the state,” said Taylor, answering a reporter’s question. “But our residents have the right to be free from a deadly sickness, and I’m going to do what I have to do to help them.” ■

Questions for Review

1. Should a governor or other government official have the right/power to keep people in their homes to “protect them”? If so, what else could he order them to do...or *not* to do?
2. How could his claim of this supposed “emergency” power be abused by the government?