

FAYETTE COUNTY COMMISSION

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September 29, 2021

PRESS RELEASE:

It is with great regret the Fayette County Commissioners inform the public we have decided unanimously to exercise our vote at the Bridge Day Commission meeting later today to effectively cancel Bridge Day 2021. We did not make this decision lightly. There have been many theories about why this issue is up for another vote only two weeks after the Bridge Day Commission voted 4-2 in favor of proceeding with Bridge Day this year, and we would like to set the record straight.

It is **not** because the County's COVID numbers are getting worse since the Bridge Day Commission voted to proceed with Bridge Day two weeks ago, because they are improving.

It is **not** because the County could not provide for the safety of the BASE jumpers or Bridge Day attendees and participants, because the State and the Summit Bechtel Reserve were prepared to provide resources to accommodate the needs of any additional sick or injured.

It is **not** because the local hospitals asked the County or the Bridge Day Commission to cancel the event, because it did not.

It is **not** because there were not enough bus drivers to transport guests or participants to events, because the State Department of Education was prepared to assist the Bridge Day Commission with recruiting volunteer bus drivers from other counties to assist.

It was **not** because the National Park Service refused to issue a permit due to any of these issues, because it granted the permit and only required a mask mandate to enter the venue.

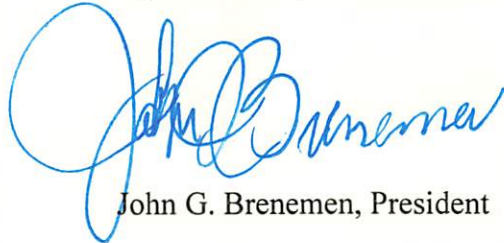
It is **not** because anything changed for the worse since the Bridge Day Commission voted to proceed with Bridge Day, **because nothing has.**

It **IS** because a small group of individuals decided it knew better than your elected Federal, State and County officials and acted to influence the coordinator of Bridge Day's main event, BASE jumping, to cancel its participation in Bridge Day. They did this by misleading him to believe the jumpers he represents would not have the support they required to efficiently reach the jump site or have access to medical care should they suffer an injury. This small group knew the BASE jumper withdrawal would likely result in the cancellation of Bridge Day - and, they were right

As you all know, BASE jumping is the main event at Bridge Day, and without it, Bridge Day would not be the same. Your County Commissioners believe the Nation's newest national park deserves to be celebrated with the full glory of Bridge Days past. Under the current circumstances, we do not believe that possible.

That said, your Fayette County Commissioners will act promptly to implement changes to the Bridge Day Commission bylaws and take all necessary action to ensure in the future no individual or small group has the power to unilaterally influence a decision that affects not just Fayette County, but also Bridge Day attendees and participants, neighboring counties, the State of West Virginia and the National Park Service. We join you in your disappointment over this news and look forward to seeing you at Bridge Day 2022.

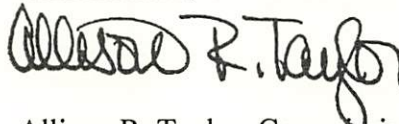
Fayette County Commission



John G. Brenemen, President



Tom Louisos, Commissioner



Allison R. Taylor, Commissioner