Facebook takes down event pages for several anti-quarantine protests

Enlarge / Protestors demonstrate against Washington state's stay-at-home order at the Capitol building in Olympia on April 19, 2020.
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Facebook has nixed event pages for planned protests against stay-at-home measures in California, New Jersey, and Nebraska. The actions come at the request of state officials, who say the gatherings would violate state orders.

Facebook event pages for similar protests in other states remain online.

"Unless government prohibits the event during this time, we allow it to be organized on Facebook. For this same reason, events that defy government's guidance on social distancing aren't allowed on Facebook," a Facebook spokesperson told Politico.

Activists across the country, mostly from the right end of the political spectrum, have begun agitating for an early end to legally mandated social distancing measures. According to The Washington Post, a trio of gun rights activist brothers in Minnesota have created a number of popular groups fighting

stay-at-home measures on Facebook, including in Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Donald Trump threw his weight behind three state protests on Friday with tweets to “LIBERATE VIRGINIA,” “LIBERATE MICHIGAN,” and “LIBERATE MINNESOTA.”

Despite the protests, polls continue to show broad public support for social distancing efforts. A Wall Street Journal/NBC poll published Sunday found that 58 percent of voters were more worried that lifting restrictions would lead to more COVID-19 deaths than they were about continued stay-at-home orders harming the economy. Democrats overwhelmingly favored continuing restrictions, while Republicans were more evenly split: 48 percent of Republicans worried more about the economy, while 39 percent worried more about the health dangers of premature liberalization.

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