

Motion on Scott Atlas for Faculty Senate Meeting of November 19, 2020

For the last six months, Scott Atlas, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and adviser to the White House, has used his public platforms to promote a view of COVID-19 that contradicts medical science.

On September 9, 2020, 105 Stanford faculty with expertise in infectious diseases, epidemiology, microbiology and health policy published an Open Letter stating that, *“many of his opinions and statements run counter to established science and, by doing so, undermine public health authorities and the credible science that guides effective public health policy.”* But he has now gone further.

On November 15, 2020, in a post to his Twitter account, Atlas called on the people of Michigan to ‘rise up’ against their Governor in response to new public health measures spurred by skyrocketing COVID-19 rates. Although he subsequently claimed that his call to rise up had been misunderstood, we believe that this latest communication is a dangerous provocation.

Scott Atlas has used his medical degree and his position at Stanford University at the Hoover Institution to claim credibility. We submit that:

He has misrepresented scientific knowledge and opinion regarding the management of pandemics.

He has actively discouraged the use of masks and other scientifically accepted protective health measures against Covid-19.

Atlas’s words have endangered our citizens and now public officials.

His pronouncements are also damaging Stanford’s reputation and academic standing.

Atlas’s disdain for established medical knowledge violates medical ethics defined by the American Medical Association.

Atlas’s behavior is anathema to our community, our values, and our belief that we should use knowledge for good.

As elected representatives of the Stanford faculty, we strongly condemn his behavior. It violates the core values of our faculty and the expectations under the Stanford Code of Conduct, which states that we all “are responsible for sustaining the high ethical standards of this institution.”

We call on university leadership to forcefully disavow Atlas’s actions as objectionable on the basis of the university’s core values and at odds with our own policies and guidelines concerning Covid-19 and campus life.