



April 13th, 2020

RE: Coronavirus Restrictions

Dear Governor Brown,

Thank you for developing a COVID 19 pandemic task force in our State. We appreciate the difficult challenges you and your staff are tackling, and know you recognize the challenges that are magnified in Oregon's rural and frontier counties. We are asking for a deeper dialogue with you as we work to re-open our communities and businesses.

We are writing to you today to voice the concerns of the communities and businesses in our Counties. Our businesses are struggling as are others, and the longer the restrictions are in place the more it is damaging their financial well-being. Small businesses can't survive much longer under these rules, and we hope you can weigh the public health considerations in our Counties and the dire economic circumstances our citizens face. We are isolated out here so social or physical distancing is pretty normal. As you know, every business in these areas is considered 'essential' to us. We need and want them all back to work soon, preferably by May 1st.

Our citizens and businesses have followed your Executive Orders and guidelines, and we are humbled to see how resourceful some of our constituents have been in complying. For all rural areas, time is of the essence. When restrictions are lifted we do not have the population to recover in a few weeks or days as in the metropolitan or large city areas, it will take a better part of a year. Even businesses that were deemed essential under the guidelines are struggling. They need the whole community working. We are confident your office can consider re-opening on a regional basis, where public health risks are reduced based on our population density and community size, but where the economic fall-out is on the edge of becoming cataclysmic.

Not unlike larger area hospitals, clinics and dental offices; we also need to allow patients to access their providers for those procedures that have been on hold since the protective orders were put in place. Local surgeries need to be able to begin scheduling procedures for local patients. Understanding that these services are directly related to PPE; with a better supply chain in place throughout the State, as we've been told to expect soon, this should facilitate 'open for business' occurring sooner rather than later. It is widely known that the current restriction on health-care services threatens our long-term access to local health-care as our hospitals and providers are running in the red already.

We are talking about local survival in these rural areas of Oregon. Please consider May 1st as the target date to restart.

We look forward to a continued dialogue and working through these issues in the coming days.



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