

Governor Tim Walz
State of Minnesota
130 State Capitol
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155

May 27, 2020

Dear Governor Walz,

On behalf of businesses in Apple Valley, Burnsville, Hastings, South St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights, we ask for a prompt turn of the dial from “business closure” to “business open” with personal/consumer responsibility.

- For the past nine weeks, small businesses have been closed to keep the health and safety of Minnesotans a top priority. They created safe re-opening plans and changed and reworked them, sometimes on a daily basis, to comply with rapidly changing guidelines. They have found new ways to serve their customers. Unfortunately, many customer facing businesses are operating at an unsustainable level, bringing in only a fraction of typical revenue while working twice as hard and incurring higher per unit costs.
- Businesses have their pandemic preparedness plans in place, plans that were created following strict guidelines from CDC, MNOSHA, MNDOL and MNDEED. Although these new plans are showing a need for more staff to serve fewer customers, small businesses are ready and willing to take that risk.
- With neighboring states opening, Minnesotans are now incentivized to leave our state for recreation, entertainment, and travel. This completely undermines our hospitality industry and encourages greater spread of the coronavirus through distant travel.

We ask that you turn the dial from the short-term strategy of business closures to a long-term strategy of opening businesses safely paired with personal and consumer responsibility. Businesses have their plans in place, now it is time to equip our citizens with preparedness templates and expectations, including social distancing and face masks, and empower them with guidance to manage their activities and maintain their health throughout the pandemic. **Please establish a more concrete, rapid timeline for opening now while reminding consumers of their personal responsibility to keep Minnesota safe.**

Ed Kearney, President
Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce



Jennifer Harmening, President
Burnsville Chamber of Commerce



Kristy Barse, President
Hastings Chamber of Commerce



Jennifer Gale, President
River Heights Chamber of Commerce



Cc: Doug Loon, President, MN Chamber of Commerce
Steve Groves, Commissioner, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development