

## **Blueprint for economic recovery in our communities**

January 14, 2021

It's tough to think about recovering from the COVID-19 while we're still experiencing new daily cases and government-imposed restrictions on business operations. But our economy needs help, now. Employers and employees from every corner of our state need to recover, or risk losing their livelihoods forever.

Last week, the Minnesota Chamber released the Blueprint for Economic Recovery. This in-depth report outlined the historic and immediate impact of COVID-19 and subsequent government restrictions on our economy, and outlined steps toward recovery that are already underway.

In 2020, our economy experienced some of the steepest declines in the last century. But businesses did what they do best – innovated, and pivoted products, services and delivery to meet consumer demands and weather the COVID-19 storm.

Small businesses, especially those in Greater Minnesota, continue to bear the brunt of the impact from restrictions. Despite these challenges, but they have served as shining examples of the historic strengths that make Minnesota a great place to do business. They've done everything they can to protect the health of employees and customers to keep our economy moving.

Two clear economic imperatives now stand before us: We must stabilize at-risk businesses and take strategic actions to accelerate recovery in the short term. These imperatives are the basis for the business community's policy priorities in the 2021 Legislative Session.

Governor Walz and legislators have several opportunities to help employers and employees and set up our economy for long-term success:

- Avoiding additional restrictions on business operations and increased costs and burdens on businesses.
- Helping businesses with cash flow and additional tax relief such as conforming with the federal rules for PPP loans.
- Enacting commonsense business lawsuit protections related to COVID-19.
- Ensuring access to child care and resumption of in-school learning to return workers.
- Supporting the public health response, and safety measures for employees and customers.

Even during a time when it feels like our country is divided, it's critical that we come together to help grow our economy. The business community – and the strong network of local chambers throughout the state – are prepared and there to help your business flourish in a post-COVID-19 economy.

Doug Loon