



North Carolina General Assembly  
House of Representatives  
Office of the Majority Leader

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN R. BELL, IV  
10TH DISTRICT

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RULES, CALENDAR, AND OPERATIONS  
OF THE HOUSE

Governor Roy Cooper  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

September 10, 2020

Dear Governor Cooper,

Much like the rest of the country, North Carolinians are struggling during these unprecedented times. We have seen businesses that were once staples in our communities forced to close down. We've seen thousands of hardworking North Carolinians lose their jobs. This economic shutdown has impacted us all, but today I am contacting you regarding the disproportionate and unfair treatment that many bar owners have faced.

North Carolina has thousands of private bars, most of which have been forced by your Executive Order to shut down for the majority of this year. These business owners and employees are still paying rent, still taking care of their families, and simply want to be given the green light to safely reopen. Yet, you vetoed numerous bipartisan bills passed by the General Assembly that would have allowed these businesses, including bars, to reopen under strict guidelines and limited capacity.


You have recently allowed gyms and bowling alleys to operate at very limited capacity, but seem to willfully ignore the pleas of bar owners and patrons across the State. You have repeatedly said that "science and data" are the driving force behind keeping bars closed, but in the same breath you say that bars are remaining closed due to the hypothetical "party atmospheres" that you say would be created, even as you have restricted alcohol sales past 11:00 pm.

These small business owners simply want to be allowed to operate under the same rules as restaurants, breweries, and wineries. What is the difference between going to a restaurant for a drink and going to a bar for a drink? You aren't required to eat at either establishment, yet your Executive Order and "Phases" imply that it is safer to consume an alcoholic beverage in a restaurant.



I join thousands of bar owners and employees who are pleading with you to let them get back to work. You are preventing hard working North Carolinians from earning a living. I urge you to listen to the concerns of bar owners, allow these businesses to safely reopen, and let North Carolina get back to work!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Bell, IV". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John R. Bell, IV  
House Majority Leader