



Friday, April 30, 2021

Governor Kate Brown
Office of the Governor
900 Court St NE, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

As elected local government officials throughout Columbia County, we would like to add our voices to the growing chorus of those objecting to the pending forced closures of businesses throughout the state.

Because of our positions, we are very close to our constituents on a daily basis. We hear about their concerns not only at our public meetings, but also while running errands in our communities. Our neighbors share their frustrations with us. Our business owners come to us with questions about how they will be able to operate under these continued restrictions.

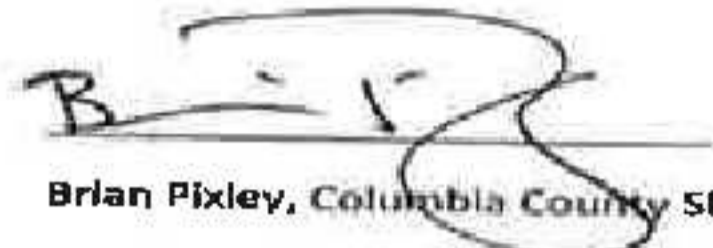
Many of our citizens and businesses were initially understanding when this public health crisis first hit just over a year ago. They were willing to do what they could to help minimize risks to their families and customers. Their struggles were evident in the emptiness we saw in our commercial corridors for months on end.

Our job creators have patiently abided by the guidelines that have been put forth by officials. They were eager to phase-in their operations over time and invested in their business when they were finally allowed to re-open. They brought back staff and rushed to fill vacant staff positions.

We would ask that instead of emphasizing shutdowns that the state focus its priorities on ensuring the widespread distribution of available vaccines, especially to the rural parts of Oregon.

Many of Oregon's county leaders have made similar requests to you, along with the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association, in an April 27 letter. But this goes beyond our hospitality industry. We are also hearing from owners and employees of various athletic clubs, bowling alleys, movie theaters and other entertainment venues. We are hearing from organizers of annual events that bring our communities together, who are unable to do any kind of planning. Aside from forging a spirit of local unity, those events also bring us together with people from neighboring communities and generate much-needed economic activity.

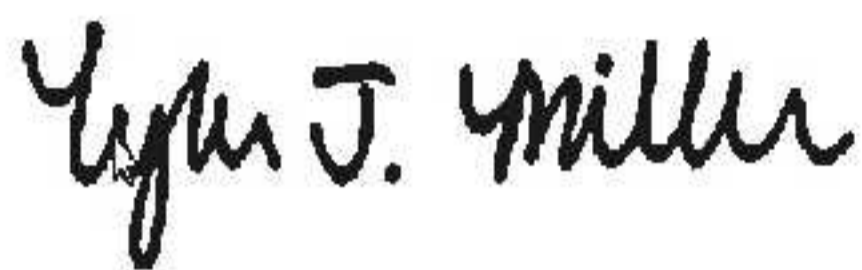
We respectfully request that you consider the needs of our communities, merchants and residents when implementing policies that could potentially devastate their ability to provide goods and services to their customers, as well as livelihoods for their families and employees. We hear directly from them, and are increasingly familiar with the growing desperation, fear and uncertainty that they are facing due to this ongoing crisis.



Brian Pixley, Columbia County Sheriff



Margaret Magruder, Chair




Casey Garrett, Commissioner

Tyler Miller, City Councilor
City of Scappoose, Oregon




Henry Heimuller, Commissioner

Rick Hobart, Mayor
Vernonia, Oregon



Bob Brajcich, Clatskanie Mayor
Clatskanie, Oregon

Jessica Chilton, Council Woman Position #4
St. Helens Oregon



Scott Burge
Mayor
City of Scappoose



Rick Scholl, St. Helens Mayor
St. Helens, Oregon



Peter McHugh, Scappoose City Council
Scappoose, Oregon



Larry Ericksen, Commissioner
Port of Columbia County



Jeff Auxier, District Attorney
Columbia County

I support this message.

J.R. Allen



Chris Iverson, Commissioner
Port of Columbia County



Nancy Ward, Commissioner
Port of Columbia County



Jerry Cole, Mayor
Rainier, Oregon

Robert Keyser

Robert Keyser, Commissioner
Port of Columbia County