

Dear Co-Chairs Holvey,

As a business owner, I am writing today to share the impacts the current COVID-19 health crisis is having on my business, my employees and my family.

I own a mid-sized photography studio in Sandy, Oregon called Studio 623 Photography. I have been in business for 14+ yrs, and photograph everything from newborns to fine art landscapes to weddings. For the past 5 years, my business has been the primary/sole income for our family. My photography studio has essentially been shut down due to COVID-19. All weddings for the foreseeable future have been cancelled or moved to the following year, meaning final payments will not be received as expected. Photo session balances for upcoming spring sessions are suspended as well. Corporate product photography contracts have been suspended as businesses shut down. Some clients are also requesting their nonrefundable retainers be returned (some are making threats to ensure this happens) which when multiplied over dozens of weddings will be a devastating hit. Many locations I have used for photography sessions are now closed (The Woodburn Tulip Farm is one, some campgrounds and natural areas are as well) so those planned session dates will be a complete loss. I am at immediate risk of losing my brick and mortar studio storefront as well as my business entirely. As of now, all contract photographers/employees working for my company have been let go for the season as many of their contracted events were cancelled so this also impacts my entire team of 4 women/mothers, some of whom are sole providers. I, myself am a very newly separated single mom of four trying not to lose everything I've worked so hard for. In another bit of bad luck and timing; on the very morning this news broke of all of the COVID-19 shutdowns, my husband broke the news that he is unhappy and has decided to end our marriage.

We are coming into what is normally the busy season for photographers in the event industry. The season where money is stored away for winter and bills are paid. I am trying to be creative and find ways to make this work, but feel help is needed to weather the storm.

These are hard times for all of us. I encourage you to support our business community as we deal with the astonishing economic disruption that has accompanied this health crisis.

Sincerely,

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