

Dear Co-Chairs Holvey and Roblan,

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

The impacts of COVID-19 to one small sole proprietor business.

I'm 70 this year and a widow of 11 years.

At the unexpected sudden passing of my husband in 2009, there were no provisions for me, insurance or otherwise.

I receive 1440.00 in Social Security. \$1142.00 of that pays my fixed rate mortgage. In this economy, I wouldn't get much of a break if I paid rent (that had the prospect of increasing annually), so I have remained in my own home, now with 15 years of equity.

Seven years ago, I created a pet sitting service as a sole proprietor to supplement my Social Security income in order to pay my household bills. My service is an in-home visitation service to care for pets while their owners are working, away on business or travel, or under medical care away from home.

I have been able to do that by myself – earning just enough to pay household bills which are approximately 750 a month not including food.

At the beginning of March, widespread news of COVID-19 hit – within 5 days, all my booked appointments had cancelled. They will continue to be cancelled indefinitely for as long as we are in a social distancing, stay at home framework. I am a month to month individual. My finances are tanked.

I am in total agreement with the precautions that have been instituted for the safety and health of our community members and our country. And I am complying.

What is concerning and distressing to me is an obvious absence of consideration for folks like myself. There are many of us. I belong to an international pet sitting organization that has over 5000 members. More than 50% are independent with no staff and offer the services similar to mine. (Many are continuing to offer services to the emergency and medical personnel on the front lines of this crisis.) There are other senior citizen Social Security recipients who earn money to the limit that is set for them in order to supplement their livability. Those opportunities are now gone for them.

Why are we folks not being considered in the relief efforts being discussed at the local, state and national level? We, too, are vital contributing members of this community and nation and have been all our lives.

Many of us cannot take advantage of small business loans. Direct cash assistance would do immeasurable aid. Please consider us in your discussions of emergency efforts towards boosting the economy – we need the help, too.

Marilee Woodrow

Pawz-Up! Pet Sitting Services by Marilee Woodrow

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,

Marilee Woodrow

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