

To the Members of the committee,

I write to you as a resident of Benton county and as a small business owner.

I shut my business down last week and have been in a haze of denial since. Last night my husband mentioned that I needed to start thinking about moving out of my office. The reality of my business is that I cannot make money from home. I cannot bleed money out through rent without being able to see clients. I am also self employed and am not eligible for any kind of unemployment insurance. I know there are many therapists who have had a much harder time shutting their practices down as we have nothing to fall back on. As I read the news articles about how long this has the possibility of going on, I realize I may not be going back to work in two weeks like I had thought when I closed my office.

I have also talked with my clients and they are scared about making rent and mortgage payments. There is a lot of fear right now. I understand the economic decisions and the repercussions of these decisions made now. I admit to caring more about the health and mental well being of our community at this time though. I think our world needs to be put on pause as much as possible right now. I hope to hear soon that rent and mortgages are put on hold.

Thank you for your time, and your hard work,

Valerie Walter, LMT #23972
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