

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 independent contractors and my family.

I own a small salon in Molalla, Oregon. Including myself, there are four stylists in my shop, and we are all independent. Each and every one of us rely on our income to help provide, or are the only provider, for our families.

I have been anxiously awaiting for Governor Brown to mandate closures for all salons, spas and barbers, as we cannot conduct business while maintaining the social distance that is recommended. I was struggling with whether I should be proactive and close, but was also fearful of what would happen to not only my finances, but those of my renters. We collectively agreed that our health, and the health of our clients, was of the upmost importance. So we closed our doors yesterday, indefinitely. We all have rent or mortgages to pay, personally and commercially, and children to feed. The financial blow could potentially destroy the possibility of even being open in the future. Not just because we might have zero operating funds, but because much of our community might not have the funds to spare on their hair or nails, let alone to spend on vital needs.

Some may think we are a non-essential business, and I agree, to a point. We provide normalcy in trying times; we are a non-judgemental person people can confide in; we make people not only look good, but also give them hope, raise their self esteem, and boost their morale and confidence. Plus, we provide real human touch, which is becoming more rare these days, even without the virus. We might touch hair, but we touch far more hearts. Something that is much needed, especially now, or at least when this is over. Those are the things that make us essential.

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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