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Subject: Testimony of Hardship-COVID-19
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I am writing in regards to the recent COVID-19 outbreak and Executive Order20-05. I am an independent contractor and tattooer that has been licensed and working in Oregon for the last 7 years. The licensed facility in which I work has decided to shutter it's doors until April 1st, or until further notice. As we see how the next few weeks unfold, it is uncertain when I will be able to start working again and safely perform tattooing and work in close proximity with other people. We collectively want to ensure the right precautionary measures in order to mitigate the spread of this virus, and to protect the most fragile and at-risk citizens in our community.

This will undoubtedly have a severe financial impact for many people without typical employment. For example, I pay my rent to work in the licensed facility on the first of the month, but have been requested to stop working by mid-month. I will not be reimbursed or returned prorated rent. Because of my typical weekly earnings, I am losing a large sum of money over the next two weeks in the face of this crisis. There is undue pressure to stock up on supplies during this time, and my mortgage is still due. This strain is causing economic hardships for companies, but more importantly, for families, small businesses, and independent contractors. With so much unknown right now as to what the next weeks and months will hold for us, I am wrought with anxiety.

Right now we need the strong and effectual leadership that I associate with Governor Brown. When will I be able to safely tattoo the public again? What measures are in place to assist or subsidize individuals like myself? Do we have any economic or social safety net to help those in need? Am I eligible for unemployment at this time?

I'm hoping my story can help in making a decision for budget and policy legislation in our beautiful state. With the help of the East Metro Economic Alliance and the Special Joint Committee on Coronavirus Response, I hope that we can get some answers, comfort, and support.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Virginia Hicks



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