

Hello, my name is Emerald Lowe and I am calling on behalf of the Oceanside Chamber of Commerce. We've spoken to hundreds of businesses throughout this challenging time and many of them have expressed deep frustration & devastation in regard to the recent reversal of openings and added restrictions. The businesses in our community that were initially forced to close have invested heavily into the sanitation, signage, marketing & other preparations required to reopen. They are taking your direction on this very seriously, but many aren't sure if they can even *afford* to reopen a second time if this continues over the next 3 weeks, or indefinitely. As more individuals continue to rely on unemployment benefits, the chokehold to small businesses will only continue to tighten while our workforce is quickly diminished.

July should be a time for our restaurants, bars, and museums to recover some of that revenue they've lost unexpectedly over the past few months. It should be an opportunity to pay bills and take care of their employees. They need our help as local leaders to survive, not added limitations and unrealistic benchmarks. Running a small business is no easy feat in any climate, so let's work together to do what we can to not add more obstacles for them to overcome.

We ask that County officials consider every possible avenue to save our small businesses before it's too late. We ask that these businesses with recent closures or added restrictions simply be allowed the opportunity to continue to operate under the existing health guidelines like many other industries continue to do.

As far as I'm concerned, **all businesses are essential** and they each play an important role in our communities. Thank you for your leadership and dedication to serving our communities and allowing me time on behalf of local businesses from our region today.