



April 24, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC TO RALPH.NORTHAM@GOVERNOR.VIRGINIA.GOV AND FIRST- CLASS MAIL

The Honorable Ralph Northam  
Governor of Virginia  
Patrick Henry Building, Third Floor  
P.O. Box 1475  
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Northam:

We are writing to you in our capacities as members of the Board of Supervisors in James City County, York County, and Council members for the City of Williamsburg, in regards to the effect Executive Orders 53 and 55 are having on our counties and cities. First of all, we want to thank you for your service to the Commonwealth during this time of unprecedented uncertainty. It appears that the actions that you have taken since the first declaration of emergency on March 12, 2020 have made positive contributions towards “flattening the curve” in the Commonwealth, and that these efforts have helped educate our citizens, as individuals, to be responsible with safe measures and guidelines. We appreciate your efforts and the daily sacrifices made by the citizens and business owners in the Commonwealth to ensure compliance with these important measures.

As you are aware, the effects of Executive Orders 53 and 55 have not been equally shared among all classes of businesses. While home improvement centers remain at full capacity with shoppers purchasing lawn and garden products, other businesses remain completely closed to the public. We are very concerned that Executive Order 53’s expiration date of May 8 and Executive Order 55’s expiration date of June 10, 2020 may put some of these closed businesses in jeopardy of never reopening.

We were encouraged by your recent comments at a press conference regarding your desire to allow barbershops to reopen with conditions. We would like to see a phased reopening of business begin

as soon as possible, provided we can ensure that our citizens are protected through reasonable limitations and the maintenance of social distancing. In the case of personal services unable to strictly maintain social distancing (like barbershops), they should be allowed to reopen with assurances of enhanced sanitation, capacity limitations and mask usage commensurate with the space in which the particular business operates. Our restaurant industry, which is being drastically affected, could reopen with strict guidelines.

As you are aware, our regional economy relies heavily on tourism. We encourage you and your staff to work with our tourism entities as they work towards a safe reopening.

We recognize that an essential component of any successful reopening plan will be an aggressive testing and tracking program. In order to adequately protect our citizens we need to know when to adjust the relaxation of restrictions to prevent a resurgence of the disease.

It is our desire that allowing the safe and fair reopening of the Commonwealth in the near future will save many of the businesses that cannot continue to survive without any customers. We appreciate your service to the citizens of the Commonwealth, as well as your thoughtful consideration of our request.



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Michael Hipple, BOS Vice Chair  
James City County



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Sue Sadler, JCSA Chair  
James City County



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Ruth Larson, JCSA Vice Chair  
James City County



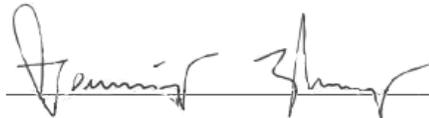
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W. Chad Green  
York County Board of Supervisors  
District 3



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Douglas G. Pons, Vice-Mayor  
City of Williamsburg



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Benming Zhang, Councilman  
City of Williamsburg