



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Commissioners Encourage Local Leaders to Join Them In Supporting the OSCC Business Reopening Plan

(Douglas County, Ore) – The Douglas County Board of Commissioners would like to encourage city, county and state officials, as well as local chambers, councils and business leaders, to join us in supporting the business reopening plan recently submitted to Oregon’s Governor and state lawmakers by the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce (OSCC). The clear and concise plan details the basis for this timely and profound recommendation that aims to help our businesses hardest hit by COVID-19, to pull through this economic recession and overcome their financial hardships.

“As fellow citizens and business owners, we share in the frustration that our local businesses, families and residents are dealing with. The last nine months have been challenging to say the least, and now more than ever before our local businesses need your support, and a united front backing them with a solid, productive plan that will provide relief and a future for their livelihoods. Please consider joining us in supporting the plan presented by the OSCC,” commented Commissioner Tom Kress.

Many of our small business communities have been the unfortunate victims of this pandemic, and they need your attention and support right now! While there have been some City, County, State and Federal COVID-Relief loans, grants and programs offered, there has simply not been enough funding to go around, or really help these businesses survive this storm. [Click here for the link to read the entire statement and plan.](#) Below is an excerpt of the conclusion and proposed plan from the OSCC statement.

“The Oregon State Chamber of Commerce (OSCC) is stating as clearly and plainly as possible: Local businesses need to be made whole, and they need to be able to re-open for business now.

The Oregon State Chamber of Commerce comes to this conclusion by way of the following:

1. Our businesses have been extremely responsible to our community and to the Covid-19 guidance coming from the state. The recent adoption of the Oregon OSHA Covid-19 Standard further means that Oregon workplaces are some of the safest and most sanitary places for customers and employees to be. Public health officials have been clear that Covid-19 is spreading in Oregon for reasons unrelated to our businesses being open.
2. Our local businesses deserve the same consideration as the Large Corporations that have prospered due to elimination of small business competition and our government employees that have been kept whole. The shutdown of our local businesses has paved the way for corporate giants to profit in the absence of thriving local business communities. Similarly, the Governor has made every effort to keep public employees drawing full paychecks. The “forgotten” people in this state have been our local businesses and their employees who have been crushed by their state government and left to fend for themselves.
3. The remedies to small business currently being offered by the State are completely inadequate. Last week’s distribution of \$20 million of small business grants by Business Oregon closed after 15 minutes due to over-subscription. Similarly, the \$55 million offered this past week by Governor Brown is wholly inadequate to match the current devastation in our local business communities. The economic damage to our local businesses and families is in the billions of dollars, not millions.
4. Shutdowns are sending our employees into a failed state unemployment system that has a history of failing to deliver timely benefits. This is disastrous for our valued employees and completely avoidable if they were simply allowed to work and earn their paychecks.

To help give our local businesses equal consideration, the OSCC and our members across Oregon are calling for:

1. Immediate re-opening of all Oregon businesses.
2. Substantial remedies to our local businesses that have been forced to shut down through no fault of their own as the state has deprived these businesses and employees of their livelihoods.
3. A \$75 million Hospitality Relief fund dedicated to helping our state’s restaurants and hospitality businesses recover.
4. A Moratorium on new or increased taxes and fees at the state and local level. Whether direct or indirect, these increase the cost of business and further deprive our businesses of cash flow.
5. Stabilization of the commercial rental market through a short term tax credit for property owners that are willing to waive debt for commercial tenants that are behind on rent.

“OSCC is calling on Governor Brown and lawmakers to give local businesses and their employees the same consideration given to others during the Covid-19 pandemic. Local businesses and their employees have shouldered the largest costs imposed by state government and now is the time to help them recover.”

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