



Atlantic County

Executive Office

DL-61-20

Dennis Levinson
County Executive

May 18, 2020

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Governor Phil Murphy
125 West State Street
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor:

Today marks another important step in our state's road to recovery with your easement of restrictions for non-essential construction and permission of vehicle gatherings for drive-in or drive-through events.

Your decision to allow curbside pick-up only for all non-essential retail businesses, however, fails to accommodate many businesses for which curbside pick-up is impractical and unfeasible. Smaller, mom and pop businesses and specialty shops will still be unable to conduct business.

While this pandemic has taken a huge toll on business, the small businesses have felt it most. They have been prohibited from opening to sell many of the same goods as Walmart, Target, Home Depot and others that have been deemed essential and remain open, and without curbside service restrictions. It has never been more difficult for them to compete with the national chains and big box stores than it is now with their doors shut and their curbs empty.

We believe the small businesses can be just as responsible, if not more so, than their big box competitors. It is far easier for them to enforce social distancing, use of face masks, and hygiene and sanitation protocols just by virtue of the smaller numbers of customers and employees.

We urge you to provide them the same opportunities by reopening retail businesses in time for the Memorial Day weekend, the unofficial kickoff to the summer season. Their futures may depend on these next few months. Without the ability to capitalize on Memorial Day business, their already uphill battle becomes far more daunting.

According to a 2019 report by the US Small Business Administration, small businesses create two-thirds of net new jobs and account for 44% of US economic activity.

We cannot afford to leave them without a life preserver. Please consider taking this next step to assist in their rescue and road to recovery.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dennis Levinson in black ink.

Dennis Levinson
County Executive

Handwritten signature of Frank D. Formica in blue ink.

Frank D. Formica
Freeholder Chairman

c: Stephen M. Sweeney, NJ Senate President
Chris A. Brown, NJ State Senator
Atlantic County Board of Freeholders
Michael Chait, President, Greater Atlantic City Chamber



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