

Dear Governor Brown,

June 19, 2020

The Chambers of Commerce of Washington and Clackamas Counties urge you to reverse your decision to tether Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah counties in the reopening of Oregon.

We appreciate your decision to allow Multnomah County to enter into Phase I so their business community may begin to re-open and begin to re-engage their workforce.

The thousands of businesses that we represent in Clackamas and Washington counties understand the significance of the virus and are making great sacrifices to comply with the guidance. Many have been preparing to enter Phase II and the sudden rule change leaves them with wasted staffing and inventory expenses that may result in more lost jobs and more families struggling for survival.

Traffic counts on our highways remain significantly down because fewer people are commuting to work as many of those who can, remain working remotely. Both Clackamas and Washington Counties have larger geographic areas spread out, east and west, which include rural areas and small towns that do not mirror the population density of the larger Multnomah County cities with regard to public meeting places, housing, and businesses.

The progression of each county into Phase II needs to be made based on EACH individual county's ability to do so. Holding any part of the region back so that others might "catch up" is detrimental to all of us.

We urge you to change this decision immediately and allow Washington and Clackamas counties to continue through the process autonomously. Our communities are financially collapsing under the weight of COVID-19, and they each deserve the opportunity to return to normal as quickly as possible.

The safety protocols set in place are stringent yet manageable and our businesses are complying. As Chambers of Commerce, we have been and will continue to encourage the businesses in our regions to continue practicing social distancing and to minimize risks with sanitizing requirements as mandated by the OHA. We will promote and encourage the adherence of the new order, to wear face masks "at all times" inside public spaces.

Both Clackamas and Washington counties are prepared to apply for Phase II. We encourage you to maintain the individual county requirements and not change to a regional approach so we may move forward in our recovery process.

Thank you,

