



March 20, 2020

Dear Governor Whitmer:

Thank you for your efforts to combat COVID-19 (coronavirus) and protect Michigan families and businesses. We appreciate your leadership and the measured approach you have taken in response to the public health emergency thus far.

As governors in other states are considering or have issued “Shelter in Place” or “Stay at Home” orders, we strongly urge you that you approach any similar order for Michigan as a last resort. While there are important public health measures states need to take to help limit the spread of the virus, we ask you to consider the lay-offs and mandatory business closures any similar order would undoubtedly trigger. Quite frankly, we are concerned that an untimely or overly broad order would create unnecessary and long-term damage to Michigan’s economic health.

Not all Michigan businesses need to cease operations due to the threat of COVID-19. For example, many businesses provide essential services and goods to our citizens. We cannot risk a disruption in the supply chain or a break in the distribution cycle. In addition, many businesses have non-interruptible operations and those operations need to be protected as we move forward. Finally, we would urge you to allow businesses to continue operations unless there is a high public health risk to employees or the general public.

At this time, we recommend against a “Stay at Home” or “Shelter in Place” Executive Order that starts from the premise that most if not all 877,000 businesses in Michigan should be closed, while a select few are allowed to stay open. As we have watched other states embark down this economically damaging road, we have seen long lists of winners and losers in executive orders that are unnecessary and create more challenges for the state to administer. However, if in coming weeks you decide that the public health emergency warrants going further, we recommend that you review the [3/18/20](#) and [3/20/20](#) letters from by the US Chamber and delivered to President Trump and Governors Hogan and Cuomo and to include a quick, efficient and no-cost appeals process that is fair and balanced.

Employers need time to give their employees and customers notice, safely close down equipment and machinery, complete essential projects and prepare contingency plans. For the vast majority of businesses, an order to cease operations on anything less than 72 hours would

be impractical and impose severe hardship on the company's employees, customers and operations.

As you contemplate how to move forward, we encourage you to read yesterday's *Wall Street Journal* [editorial](#), Rethinking the Coronavirus Shutdown: No society can safeguard public health for long at the cost of its economic health. We believe it provides a balanced viewpoint on this critical issue.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this matter further and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rich Studley  
President & CEO

CC: Senate Majority Leader Shirkey  
Speaker Chatfield