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MICHIGAN STATE SENATOR
LANA THEIS
22ND DISTRICT

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

Governor Gretchen Whitmer
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Governor Gretchen Whitmer,

Throughout Livingston and Washtenaw counties, and indeed across the whole of Michigan, thousands of privately owned and operated businesses remain shuttered and their employees without work due to your stringent executive orders in response to COVID-19.

These seemingly arbitrary orders have strayed from the initial “essential versus nonessential” discussion to what now appears to simply be picking winners and losers. I continue to hear from my constituents — job providers, workers and customers alike — who are befuddled, still wondering why certain places are open while others are not. I’m with them. Why is it that big box stores, restaurants and casinos are open to the public, while gyms, bowling alleys and movie theatres remain closed? These are facilities that are safely open in nearly all of the rest of the country, even New York.

Governor, there doesn’t appear to be any real rational explanation as to why you continue to keep thousands of hardworking Michiganders out of their jobs and struggling to make ends meet. I have heard the heart-wrenching testimonies of workers and business owners who are facing both financial and emotional hardships. Your executive orders are more than words on paper. Each of the 170 orders you have given — by far the most in the nation — has impacted someone in some way, and our people are being punished through no fault of their own. They have children to feed, mortgages and bills to pay, and businesses to run. Their livelihoods are essential to living the American dream, and our businesses cannot remain shuttered and have a viable chance at survival.

We are in a different place than we were five months ago. Michigan is not facing the same health crisis it was in March. The curve is flattened. But, as time drags on under your draconian executive orders, we surely will be facing a manmade economic disaster that could take years to overcome.

There is a better, simpler way, governor, that focuses on what work can be done safely instead of what is deemed essential by you. The people of the 22nd State Senate District believe that the remaining businesses currently closed could safely reopen with measures that have already been applied to the businesses that were previously allowed to reopen.

Once again, I am asking you to consider the voices of Michiganders across Livingston and Washtenaw counties who are being negatively impacted as a result of your executive actions. Please hear their voices, consider their plight, and let's get Michigan back to work.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lana Theis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lana Theis
State Senator
District 22