



Date June 4, 2020

To Mendocino County Board of Supervisors; Mendocino County Public Health Officer

From Mendocino County Lodging Operators

**Subject Reopening Lodging Requested Action**

### **REQUESTED ACTION**

That the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and our Public Health Officer support the opening of leisure travel, so as to meet the health, safety and economic needs of our county. This support may mean implementing a policy that 1) is no more restrictive than the State of California or 2) exercises County authority to open leisure travel should the State provide this option.

### **RECOMMENDED PLAN**

We hope to embark on a process together whereby we work to reopen tourism in our community in a thoughtful and viable way. We seek this partnership with the County to practice solutions that keep our citizens safe and address the economic needs of both the tourism industry and the County as a whole. In order to make progress, we recommend three core principles to carefully reopen. The three principles are:

1. **HEALTH & SAFETY**
2. **STABLE PARTNERSHIP**
3. **ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

As we navigate our way forward, the overriding concern that must remain top of mind is public health. COVID 19 is among the health issues that should be addressed, but we must also weigh the non-COVID health consequences, including increased rates of depression, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, food poverty, and suicide, all exacerbated by job, housing and shelter insecurity.

Nationwide, this pandemic has hit marginalized populations the hardest: to our south, 97% of the COVID 19 cases in Sonoma County are in the Hispanic community. The vast majority of jobs in the tourism industry can be performed by people with little formal education, which provides a means for Mendocino County residents in the lower economic sector to earn a living. The longer tourism is closed, the more exposed this portion of our population becomes. Lodging is already accustomed to training our staff according to OSHA safety regulations; it is no different with the OSHA guidelines for COVID 19.

If we allow more of our community to slip into economic depravity, the long-term public health consequences will be severe. There are inadequate resources to combat the desperation being brought about by the pandemic and its economic consequences. We need to get our people back to work as soon as possible; tourism in Mendocino cannot wait, or we risk the permanent destruction of our community.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

- Will you please consider the big picture of our public health crises and include non-COVID health consequences as important factors in the conversation?
- At the State level, how much consideration is being given to the non-virus effects of this pandemic (specifically, mental health, economic well-being and the increasing poverty, and therefore exposure, of marginalized populations)?

#### **STABLE PARTNERSHIP**

We are your permanent partner in reopening the economy in a safe and responsible way. Over the past several months, lodging has worked to prepare processes for safely opening as soon as permitted by the State of California. We have developed detailed protocols for a safe reopening, have ordered PPE in large quantities and are in the process of retraining our employees to operate in a more responsible and deliberate way. We have direct and consistent communication with our guests. This makes us uniquely situated to partner with the County to deliver critical messages to our visitors in a way that is positive, constructive, and reinforces our commitment to community welfare.

Additionally, out-of-county visitors are already coming to Mendocino in large numbers - growing each week- and driving unlawful, irresponsible, unmonitored behaviors. By and large, they illegally camp, stay in private homes, or are day visitors, clearly leading to greater community health risk for everyone. Realizing that visitation to and through Mendocino is inevitable, a thoughtful and customized plan to reopen for our region is essential.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

- Will you accept our role as economic and community partners by allowing our industry to be the conduit through which safe and responsible visitation is allowed?
- At the State level, will you advance the idea that lodging is a safe portal for tourism, as opposed to the unchecked and uneducated travel that is currently happening?

#### **ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

Economically, the coronavirus has shattered our public and private budgets — and has sent thousands of dedicated tourism and hospitality workers to the unemployment line across the county. Of course,

this is not news to you, as you are painfully aware. But because our economy is less diverse, and heavily dependent on tourism to survive, we need to be treated with greater urgency to ensure our survival.

Mendocino lodging has been shut down since mid-March, and this presents long term fiscal challenges for the County to be able to deliver basic services including law enforcement, firefighting, parks and trail maintenance, community development, code enforcement, engineering, economic development and administration.

If we do not reopen tourism soon, more small businesses will fail, many of the properties belonging to or rented by these businesses will go back to the banks and potentially remain vacant for years to come. Permanent job loss will decimate our communities, and the community fabric will be torn apart as people leave these areas in hopes of finding jobs in more economically viable locations. Our businesses, livelihoods, and the jobs of thousands of employees-our friends and neighbors-remain in peril.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

- Will you support us in allowing Mendocino County to reopen leisure travel as soon as it is permitted by the State of California or as soon as the State gives counties the authority to do so?
- How can we support your efforts to reopen leisure travel as soon as possible?

#### **SUMMARY**

We believe this core principles approach puts public health first, allows the Mendocino County lodging to reopen, and reinforces a stable partnership that is essential to the long-term health and vibrancy of our community.

On behalf of the undersigned lodging owners in Mendocino County, we thank you for your leadership and guidance during the COVID-19 crisis. Balancing the myriad challenges facing our community is very difficult in the best of times, let alone under the current circumstances.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request and remain ready to engage with the County as a partner on this journey back to a healthy and resilient community.

Respectfully,

[LIST OF ALL LODGING PROPERTIES IN SUPPORT WILL GO HERE]

Name

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Alexis Sanchez  
Alyssa Cisneros  
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Ana Pena  
Ananya Kumar  
Andres Olivares  
Angel Ledesma  
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Bhavesht Patel  
Bianca Resto  
Bonnie Noble  
Brian Genao  
Bridgette Zunino  
Brooke Davis  
Brooke ramirez  
Cally Dym  
Cam Witte  
Cara Lamb  
Carol Johns(Van Zandt's Redwood View Resort)  
Carolyn Dunn  
Cassandra Garza  
Cassidy Bell  
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Cheri Osborne  
Chong Mejias  
Christina Neiman  
Christopher Boettcher  
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Jackie Vazquez  
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Jeff Stanford  
Jeffrey Stafford  
Jenna Roberson  
Jennie Murphy  
Jennifer Taylor  
Jessica Cruz-Cherrez  
Jim Hurst  
Jitu Ishwar  
Joan Stanford  
Joey Oda

Johana Velazquez  
JOHN CROCKER  
John Dixon  
Jon Glidewell  
Jude Lutge  
Judith Ventura  
Julie Keaton  
justine battersby  
kaitlyn clark  
Karin Dorsey  
kat hawley  
Katherine Waid  
Kayla Brianna  
Kayla Mendoza  
Kelly Bird  
Kevin Orr  
Kim Queen  
Larry Willard  
Laura Hockett  
Lauren Ghiselli  
Le John Escoro  
Leslie Lutge  
Lezlie Kookenboo  
Lorin Ohayon  
Luke Fraser  
Lynne Hopper  
Madelyn Tran  
mariah braganza  
Marilyn Rose  
Marjorie Kamb  
Mark Hancock  
Mary Titus  
Mary Williams  
Meagan Demitz  
Megan Cooper  
Michael Gordon  
Michelle Shortridge  
Mila Cordero  
Miren Alvarez  
Nancy Cardenas-Fowler  
Natalie Moore  
Natilee Gonzalez  
Neb Zewdie  
Nick Patel  
Nicole Fakrawalla  
Niels Bjerre  
Olivia Christian

Olivia Leach  
Oscar Lerma  
Pamela Perez  
Pamela Pollard  
peter hernandez  
Peter Wells  
Peyton Hetland  
Qvy Ho  
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Raquel Velazquez  
Remigijus Milcius  
Renata Dorn  
Richard Keaton  
Roselyn Zelaya  
Rosemary Campiformio  
Roshankumar Patel  
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Samir Tuma  
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Sara Hodge  
Sarah Kammer  
Scott Connolly  
Scott Schneider  
Shane Perrigo  
Shanice Williams  
Sharon Davis  
Sharon Hansen  
Shelley and Richard Priest  
Sid Garza-Hillman  
Sidra Stone  
Skye Huber  
Sofia De Leon  
Sophia Lindner  
Stacy Lopez  
Stephanie Silva  
Stephanie Voltero  
Stuart Marcus  
Susan Cimmiyotti  
Susan Winding  
Susie Plocher  
Tatiana Johnson  
Tavian Myers  
Terrence Franklin  
Teyah Murray  
Tré Hunt  
Trevon Mehtlan  
Triston Cooper

Valeria Herrejon  
Veronica Gutiérrez  
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Wendy “Taylor “ Slevin  
Yoana Anguiano  
ysabella Ponder  
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