

From: **Jim Eichenlaub**
Date: Thu, Mar 19, 2020
Subject: Housing an essential business

Speaker Turzai

I am reaching out to you to seek your help and clarification regarding Governor Wolf's recent order closing additional business sectors effective 8PM today.

I find it hard to believe that the Governor would take steps to shut down the very industries that are charged with providing the very shelter in which the citizens of Pennsylvania are being ordered to take refuge in social distancing!

The list provided with his order is confusing at best. For instance, remodelers and home improvement contractors are being told to cease operations, while specific trade contractors (plumbing, electrical, HVAC, etc) and building supply distributors are allowed to remain open. Who does he think manages these home improvements coordinating the trades and ordering the materials and supplies. For example, I have a remodeling contractor who started remodeling the homeowner's kitchen and bath 10 days ago. While he is scrambling to complete, what is he to do now?

Similarly, we have citizens who are close to having their new homes completed and ready for move-in. Are they to cease and disrupt their schedule to shelter and inform the buyers of their existing home they too cannot move into the home they purchased? The ripple effect of this decision is extensive.

Similar confusion exists in the multi-family industry of whom I also represent. He closes real estate leasing offices. Lists RV and Boarding housing as businesses to remain open but what about rental and multifamily housing businesses. The need to maintain and continue operations is essential. Security, maintenance and service to tenants must continue, but how can that be coordinated and accomplished if their real estate management and leasing offices are ordered to close? Their ability to continue to lease offices (members are leasing only vacant units) must be maintained to continue the accessibility of shelter. What is to happen to a woman who is trying to escape a domestic abuse situation to do now with our leasing offices and operations closed.

We certainly understand these are **VERY** trying times and significant measures need to be taken to control the spread of COVID-19, but **HOUSING AND ITS PROVIDERS ARE A LIFE SUSTAINING AND ESSENTIAL BUSINESS.**

We all understand the actions being taken in the country and our Commonwealth are having a crippling impact on our local, state and national economies. Why would we shut down a significant contributor to our GDP that is also life essential service, Shelter?

During this crisis, my local associations, in coordination with the Pa Builders Association and the National Association of Home Builders have been proactive in providing our members with information, guidelines and best practices to protect their customers and workers from contracting and spreading this disease. We believe that with these measures in place and continued vigilance we can and should be able to continue to provide shelter and fuel our economy.

Your assistance in reversing this order lifting the ban on residential housing business operations is appreciated.

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