



April 22, 2020

Chamber Members & Community Partners:

Sunday marked one month since Governor Newsom issued the statewide stay at home order, which mandated major changes in how we educate our kids, run our businesses and live our lives. Throughout this month, I have been overwhelmingly impressed and inspired by our local business community - how you have all made modifications in how you operate, the selfless acts of kindness and charity, the solidarity that we are all showing during this challenging time.

Our team at the Chamber believes it is nothing less than an honor to serve you and our local business community, and we are trying to be your central resource for the information and resources you need and your advocate for the policies that will power a recovery.

Over the last month, we've been working to provide tools and resources to help our members navigate the deluge of information on new rules and available relief. Here's a list of our major initiatives:

- * We held webinars on new employee leave benefits and small business relief programs
- * We launched the "My Business Status" portion of our website
- * We partnered with the City, County and Kern EDC to launch the Business Resource Response Team
- * We developed resource guides on local restaurants, a thorough guide on business resources, a fact sheet on the differences between the SBA's Paycheck Protection (PPP) and Disaster Loan (EIDL) programs, and a list of member lenders participating in the PPP
- * Last week, we launched a series of videos on our social media channels by members on a range of topics, I encourage you to check out the most recent post by Cherese Grell on adjusting our mindsets during this challenging time

We have also been working for you as a local leader on the advocacy front, over the past month we have:

- * Opened discussions with the City on a phase one plan to provide small business relief through tax and fee deferrals (passed the first week of April)
- * Developed a coalition of local trade organizations to support relief for small businesses, funding for healthcare providers, and payments to individuals as a portion of the CARES Act
- * Co-developed (with the Fresno Chamber) a coalition of nearly 80 California chambers of commerce to advocate for universal nonprofit eligibility for the CARES relief programs
- * Started a series of roundtables this week on viewpoints on reopening the economy and additional federal investments that some of our industry sectors may need

We know that this public health situation is at times frustrating and confusing. We want to know how we can serve you, so don't hesitate to reach out if there's something you need. Working together, we can accelerate efforts to get back to business and continue building something better!

All the best,

Nick Ortiz
President/CEO
Greater Bakersfield Chamber