



The Honorable Brian Kemp
Governor of the State of Georgia
206 Washington Street
Suite 203, State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

April 29, 2020

Governor Kemp:

The Young Democrats of Georgia would like to thank you for your efforts to protect the wellbeing of the people of the state of Georgia in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The steps you took ordering a statewide shelter-in-place helped to flatten the curve. In light of the positive effects of the previously mentioned efforts to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, especially the possibility of a significant loss of life, we are urging you to reconsider the decision you made on April 20, 2020, to allow the re-opening of certain businesses.

We ask that you continue to allow Executive Order 04.02.20.01 to be enforced as well as consider extending the order until we have a greater capacity for testing. Before Executive Order 04.02.20.01, there was a patchwork of local ordinances and orders related to COVID-19. While these individual orders each took some measures to protect Georgians, your statewide order was the most effective. Georgia is in the bottom 5 out of 50 states for testing. Since we have yet to hit the peak of this pandemic's effect we should not be relaxing restrictions. The decision to reopen certain businesses such as restaurants and tattoo parlors will overwhelm hospitals, especially in rural areas, as well as further spread the disease. We urge you to wait until all of Georgia has adequate testing capabilities and readily available medical supplies before reopening the state.

As of April 29, 2020, according to the Georgia Department of Health, there are 25,304 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 1,054 of those resulting in death. Over 4% of those diagnosed have passed away from a cause of death related to COVID-19. At least 64% of confirmed cases are from those under the age of 60. The workforce and consumers that will be going back to regular public interaction due to the ending of restrictions primarily belong to this age group. Considering this, it is highly malignant to jeopardize the worker's safety in order to prioritize profits. The threat is further highlighted by the fact that lifting these restrictions prevents anyone making over \$300 per week from filing for and receiving unemployment benefits. Any amount below [\\$506.40 per week](#) is not a living wage for a single adult with no children. This in turn forces them to choose between their own and their family's safety and earning an income. Additionally, the steps these employees have to take to ensure their and their customer's safety are extraordinary.

Additional considerations for the state of Georgia should be made in regards to our rural communities. You have cited that there have been changes in supply regarding PPE, but there are many healthcare facilities that are still operating without



PPE or are running out. This issue is only exacerbated in rural communities, and without increased testing capability, there will be more preventable deaths.

Furthermore, it is not only reckless but it is unreasonable for the elderly and the medically fragile to be able to maintain proper safety procedures with these new relaxed orders. Even with proper social distancing, there are common areas that all Georgians see: grocery stores, gas stations, medical offices, etc. that will no longer be able to monitor the spread of infection as closely. Even if an immunocompromised elderly person did everything right, they could be just as easily exposed to those who choose to visit tattoo parlors, nail technicians, and other non-essential businesses at this time, endangering their life.

Finally, your decision on rescinding is endangering the lives of many working-class Georgians, especially Black, Brown and other people of color who work in these specific professions. Black Georgians' lives matter, and Black Georgians in Southwest Georgia have borne the brunt of this pandemic as well as the horror and destruction it has caused. We support the details and actions called for by the YDG Black Caucus from you and your fellow Republicans in the General Assembly, as detailed in a separate letter, and elevate their frustration with your decision.

In light all of all this, we once again ask that you consider the well being of our fellow Georgians and rescind your order to re-open the state. The Young Democrats of Georgia thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

The Young of Democrats of Georgia

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President of College Democrats of Georgia, Bhavin Patel, s/ Bhavin Patel

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