



SONOMA COUNTY
HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

February 9, 2021

County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
575 Administration Drive
Santa Rosa CA 95403

RE: Relief of County Fees and Licenses

Dear Sonoma County Board of Supervisors:

As we approach the one-year mark of the arrival of Covid-19 in Sonoma County, hundreds of food service and hospitality businesses have pivoted to changing and evolving orders issued by the Sonoma County Health Department and State of California. These businesses have done their best to comply and act in a manner that would keep employees and customers safe. The changes implemented have required a tremendous amount of financial investment by these businesses, made more acute as estimated millions of dollars in lost revenue coincide with the upgrades.

You have undoubtedly already heard from business leaders requesting relief from annual county licenses and permits, which remain at full cost and carry aggressive late fees. While we understand that the county health department has been working with businesses on renewal extensions and waivers of late fees, the principal of the matter is having to pay fully for a permit that could not be fully utilized.

On behalf of our 150 members and the hundreds of business operators affiliated with the signers below, who have faced significant adverse impacts to their businesses, ***we are requesting that you authorize the waiving of annual permit fees to impacted businesses for a full year.*** This would go a long way toward easing one source of pressure on businesses, and could be financed through building it into our county's economic recovery plan. It would be a benefit that EVERY Sonoma County business would benefit from, as opposed to a grant or other limited program.

The undersigned request that you make a it a priority to provide relief from county fees and licenses for businesses adversely impacted in our communities in 2021. We would be happy to discuss this matter with you in more detail as the situation warrants.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,

Eric Markson, Board President and Chair, Sonoma County Hospitality Association
Lorene Romero, President &CEO, Windsor Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center
Tallia Hart, Chief Executive Officer, Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau
Neena Hanchett, Executive Director, Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce
Linda M. Collins, Executive Director, Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
Liz Derammelaere, Executive Director, Cotati Chamber of Commerce
Peter Rumble, CEO, Santa Rosa Metro Chamber
Karin Moss, Executive Director, Russian River Chamber of Commerce
Alma Magallon, President, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Sonoma County
Steve Plamann, President, Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce
Lisa Orloff, Executive Director, Rohnert Park Chamber of Commerce
Tony Bugica, President, Geyserville Chamber of Commerce
Mark Bodenhamer, CEO, Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce
Onita Pellegrini, CEO, Petaluma Area Chamber of Commerce