



April 20, 2020

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor of Wisconsin
Room 115 East, State Capital
ELECTRONICALLY DELIVERED

Dear Governor Evers:

We first wish to thank you and the first lady, your staff, and all the public servants of this great state for their dedication and hard work to keep us safe during this public health and business crisis. Our primary concern during this Covid-19 pandemic is to keep Wisconsin's citizens safe. Businesses large and small are doing their part to meet this objective. Our organizations believe this health crisis should be managed by doctors, public health officials, and scientists advising the governor, state government and the Legislature on how to keep citizens safe. Scientific and medical recommendations must be the basis on which decisions to ease and eventually lift business closures and shelter-at-home restrictions are made.

In light of the federal guidelines issued April 16 that details specific parameters for reopening society and businesses and the 22 million plus new jobless claims in just the past month, we want a vigorous, deliberate, and inclusive process to fine-tune plans to help guide the safe and responsible re-opening of Wisconsin's economy.

We strongly encourage you to immediately put together a pandemic advisory committee representing the various sectors of Wisconsin's businesses -- such as agriculture, representative municipal officials, manufacturing, health care, restaurant, tourism, hospitality, education and other industry representative small businesses -- along with members of the public health and medical communities. We expect this balanced approach, supported by scientific evidence, and focused on restoring economic vitality will best determine how and when Wisconsin is going to open up for business.

Everyone recognizes that reopening Wisconsin is not as simple as flipping a switch. There currently remain many unmet needs in our state and at the local level, including state-wide health care capacity, wide-spread state and local testing, contact tracing, isolation capacity and available PPE. That means there is a great deal of work to be done *in advance* of May 26 to determine what guidelines will be in place to reopen safely, particularly in the strong likelihood there would still be social distancing mandates. Having input from the business community to create those plans will help assure a smoother process and assist in balancing business needs and capabilities in different parts of the state.

Creating a plan will determine if we are able to reopen sooner than May 26 if certain counties or regions have met the state public health and federal guidelines. Having businesses

support the creation of the plan will be critical to such consideration. Let the La Crosse region show you that Wisconsinites can set the standard for doing this the right way.

The economic impact of the pandemic is unprecedented. Our business community is eager to remain a supporter of staying safe, but is even more eager to serve their customers, employees, and our communities. Many business owners have indicated they are frustrated that their voices and expertise are not being heard or acknowledged. By creating this pandemic advisory committee, you will give business a seat at the table, create a plan and be ready to put Wisconsinites back to work in a measured way that makes scientific and business sense, regardless of the political outcome. We stand ready to assist and look forward to the day when we can all flip our business signs from closed to open.

Sincerely,

7 Rivers Alliance

La Crosse Area Development Corporation

/s/ Chris Hardie
Chris Hardie, Chief Executive Officer

/s/ Jorge Beltran
Jorge Beltran, Executive Director

cc: Senator Jennifer Schilling
Representative Jill Billings
Representative Steve Doyle
The Honorable Missy Hughes
The Honorable Andrea Palm
The Honorable Tim Kabat
County Board Chair Tara Johnson
7 Rivers Executive Committee
LADCO Executive Committee