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Julie Coons, President and CEO, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce  
Eric Terry, President, Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, & Travel Association  
Gary M. Cohen, Executive Vice President, Glory Days Grill  
Jon Norton, CEO, Great American Restaurants  
Mark Carrier, B.F. Saul Company Hospitality Group

Dear Julie, Eric, Gary, Jon and Mark:

Thank you for your letter of May 21 requesting that Northern Virginia businesses enter Phase 2 of Governor Northam's Forward Virginia plan at the same time as the rest of the state.

Like you, I was pleased that our County and regional health statistics have improved and now meet the Governor's threshold for entering Phase 1 on Friday, as he announced yesterday. I trust you also have seen the emergency ordinance we hope to adopt Thursday to allow our restaurants, breweries, and wineries enhanced flexibility so they can operate in this phase as well. I was proud to help lead this effort to ensure more of our business community could safely operate earlier than would have otherwise been possible under the Governor's plan.

Regarding your request, as was the case with entering Phase 1, the decision to enter Phase 2 is ultimately one that only Governor Northam can make based on the health criteria he has laid out. That said, on Monday, my regional counterparts and I mailed another letter to the Governor updating him on our region's health statistics. In it, we also noted our desire to "move to Phase 2 in concert with the rest of the Commonwealth" if the data supports it. Please know I share your desire to return to some sense of normalcy, and I agree that doing so must only occur when our local statistics meet Governor Northam's requirements

I do have a quick clarification. The letter you reference, sent by Northern Virginia jurisdictions to the Governor, did not request that the Governor do anything other than review the data presented by the local health departments to the Virginia Department of Health and various city and county chief administrative officials. The letter was directed at two points: (1) reminding the Governor of the threshold metrics he established for transitioning to Phase 1 of his *Forward Virginia* reopening plan; and (2) providing him with an analysis from local health departments of how the Northern Virginia region measures up against the Governor's threshold metrics. It was an informational communication to the Governor and not a document with any independent legal significance because, again, only the Governor has the authority to issue Executive Orders.

That said, with an entrance to Phase 1 now scheduled for Friday, I think the Governor's efforts to ensure our meeting of his health criteria for Phase 1 will ultimately help us more quickly reach Phase 2, when even more businesses and operations can return.

Please know our Board recognizes the hardships that many in our community are facing as a result of COVID-19. I hope the ordinance mentioned above, as well as the microloan and grant opportunity approved by our Board, are useful during these difficult times.

Thank you again for your letter and for all that you do for our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff McKay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeffrey C. McKay  
Chairman