

April 3, 2020

Secretary Lindsay Kurrle
Agency of Commerce and Community Development
One National Life Drive
Deane C. Davis Building, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

Dear Secretary Kurrle,

The Vermont tourism industry is grateful for all of the work your team are doing during these trying and unprecedented times for Vermont; specifically, for those businesses that have closed and their workers. As statewide business organizations, we have heard from many lodging properties throughout the state about the Governor's recent order. We are very concerned about the economic impact the closure of these businesses will have on our rural communities and downtowns. We know you share this concern.

The lodging industry supports the concepts behind Governor Scott's recent "Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order in order to stem the spread of COVID-19 and save the lives of Vermonters. While our lodging properties depend on the traveling public, there is consensus that right now is not the time to host visitors. However, many in the industry have had difficulty understanding why the additional guidance on this order included a mandatory closure of online reservation systems for future reservations. With that in mind, we encourage you to modify the guidance to include the following:

- That reservations for future stays be allowed to be taken as of Saturday, April 4, 2020; and
- That reservations may be made for arrivals beginning June 1, 2020.

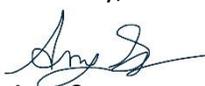
This guidance should apply to all licensed lodging establishments as well as short-term rental properties. We hope that you will agree to allow lodging properties to take these future reservations. As statewide organizations, we will make every attempt to notify lodging properties to ensure compliance with guidance issued. By adding this clarity, it allows the industry to respond appropriately to guests for the upcoming summer, fall and winters seasons.

Many lodging properties are small, independently owned businesses that have been part of a strong tourism industry that until recently employed 32,000 people, contributing \$2.9 billion to the economy and attracting nearly 13 million visitors a year to Vermont. We want to make sure the Vermont tourism industry is healthy, safe and prepared to welcome these visitors, but only when the time is right.

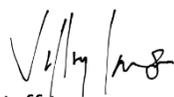
Lodging establishments are asking for meaningful relief as they close their businesses, lay off their workers, sanitize their facilities and worry about the future of their business, their workers, their families and their livelihoods. Allowing these businesses to take in future reservations will go a long way to helping them.

We are available to discuss this at any time or to coordinate a call with key lodging operators, so you have a complete understanding of the magnitude of economic pain in our state. Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter. Taking this action could save many in this industry.

Sincerely,



Amy Spear
Vice President of Tourism
Vermont Chamber of Commerce



Jeff Lawson
Executive Director
Vermont Convention Bureau



Molly Mahar
President
Vermont Ski Areas Association