
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

May 20, 2020

Ald. Mark A. Borkowski
(414) 286-3768

MEDIA ALERT

Council member urges immediate full business reopening for Milwaukee

In a letter sent today (**attached**) to Mayor Tom Barrett, **Alderman Mark A. Borkowski** urges the immediate removal of COVID-19 related restrictions on businesses so that Milwaukee's economy can begin its recovery process.

With the sudden ending of the statewide Safer-at-Home order (ruled unenforceable by the Wisconsin Supreme Court on May 13) and the current Moving Milwaukee Forward order initiated by the City of Milwaukee Health Department on May 15, the alderman points to the devastating economic toll caused by the city order's restrictions on businesses – even as a large number of businesses just blocks away in Milwaukee County municipalities have mostly reopened.

In part, the letter states: “I do not need to tell you the incredible economic loss many have suffered. Businesses have closed, retirement accounts have been drained, and thousands have been put out of work. When this was a shared sacrifice, when our state and our region bore this together, it was hard to take. Now asking our businesses to go this alone is unimaginable.”

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MARK A. BORKOWSKI
ALDERMAN, 11TH DISTRICT

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- Licenses Committee
- Public Safety & Health Committee
- Foundation for the Milwaukee Fire Education Center
- Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners

May 20, 2020

The Honorable,
Mayor Tom Barrett
City Hall

Dear Mayor Barrett:

It is time to acknowledge the hard truth that the attempt to fashion a regional alternative to Governor Evers' "Safer at Home" order has failed. With every area order save our own set to expire in only a few days, Milwaukee businesses must no longer be placed at a competitive disadvantage as compared to their suburban peers. The time for our own order to end has come.

I do not need to tell you the incredible economic loss many have suffered. Businesses have closed, retirement accounts have been drained, and thousands have been put out of work. When this was a shared sacrifice, when our state and our region bore this together, it was hard to take. Now asking our businesses to go this alone is unimaginable. Our districts border communities that will soon no longer have orders. Whatever merits these orders might have had, the COVID-19 virus will not honor the lines on the map that divide us and all we will be left with are the legitimate complaints of tax-paying business owners who can see their competitors opening up right across the street.

And while we speak of our order, no one seems to be able to tell us or the community what will be in it. What will be opened? What will be closed? And, most relevantly, when will it end? No business can just re-open. It is a planning process that the City should be assisting with, not making more difficult.

Yes, the Milwaukee Health Department should continue to develop and distribute information about best practices for operating various categories of business safely. Yes, we should continue to monitor the progress of the virus in our community in case changes need to be made. And, yes, through it all, we should be working with the Governor and the Legislature to craft bi-partisan solutions. This virus seems likely to be with us for a while. We must work together to create a plan that includes a sustainable, vibrant, open economy.

Respectfully,

Mark A. Borkowski,
Alderman, 11th District