

Trustees
Mary C. Dominiak
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Trustees
Scott A. Pierce
Ted P. Poulos
Daniel Yost

Lawrence M. Hanson, Mayor

Lori K. Romine, Village Clerk

May 15, 2020

Governor J.B. Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker,

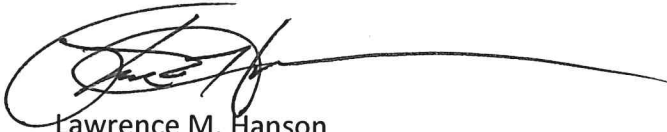
It is apparent that you've taken a number of carefully calculated steps to try to establish a comprehensive means of combatting COVID-19, and the citizens of this State thank you for your leadership to date. As the mayor of a small town on the Wisconsin border in northwest Lake County, we can understand and appreciate the complexity of trying to achieve a fair balance between competing concerns of public safety and the need for people to have jobs to put food on the table and pay rent and mortgages. Your 5-step plan shows us that you've given this considerable thought.

The Village of Antioch understands the state is trying to balance being compassionate not only for the sick and vulnerable, but also allow the greater population the opportunity to prosper. Respectfully, including Antioch into the greater Chicago sector makes it impossible for our town to prosper. I look to the competing Wisconsin towns just to the north of us and I see small businesses open, while practicing social distancing and limiting the number of people in a store. My business community has asked me why they can't do that. Surely, the risk of harm to the people cannot be greater in a large grocery store or home center packed with customers than it is in small businesses that might get a dozen or two customers in the course of a day. Stimulus payments won't ever make up the loss of customers to large chains and internet-based delivery businesses. Our community, like many others, will suffer extreme long-term losses of key businesses if they can't reopen very soon.

We have one unique gift shop, JJ Blinkers. It's been featured on network TV several times over the years. It's a mainstay of our community, but aside from Halloween, it's just a small business that sees that dozen or so customers a day. Those daily customers are what keeps this small business alive from year to year, and it's the sort of business that brings vibrancy to our downtown Main Street. The owners support all the civic functions and are giving people. I don't know why this sort of business cannot remain open, when Walmart attracts thousands of customers to its local store daily. I cannot see any logic to the distinction drawn between these businesses.

Allowing small businesses to reopen, while practicing social distancing, wearing masks and limiting numbers of customers to me seems logical, fair and appropriate. I believe it also greatly levels out the necessary balance of human enterprise and safety from the current situation. Please work with the Village of Antioch to restore our small businesses while protecting our citizens from this terrible disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lawrence M. Hanson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lawrence M. Hanson
Mayor