



Dear Representative Hortman,

Thank you for taking the time to hear from our Moorhead business community. I am the President/CEO of Downtown Moorhead Inc. and provide economic development services for the City of Moorhead under contract.

I first would like to say that our local business community is amazing. So full of pride and willing to help each other in these difficult times. As the restrictions have continued in Minnesota, business challenges have grown. Many look across the river to North Dakota and see similar industries open, since May 1st, with little or no restrictions at all. This disparity will widen further starting tomorrow as North Dakota enters into their "low risk" designation. Many have lost customers and income as consumers are now using services in Fargo. Their fear is that these customers will never come back and they will not be able to recover.

I truly feel for our business community and their personal stories are devastating... Many are seeking an opportunity to be heard and have a chance to open safely. Many of them own restaurants/shops in Fargo and Moorhead but most are not seeing a future in Moorhead. We have heard from many that they will close their Moorhead establishments and focus on one storefront in North Dakota.

I know the State of Minnesota has been basing decisions on when we may peak and hospital capacity but many are starting to question the connection to our community. In Moorhead, the hospital system is in Fargo. The hospitals are physically located in Fargo, testing is being conducted regularly, and capacity is not an issue according to the health officials. To further stress this point, Fargo closed their emergency medical facility temporarily located at the FargoDome a few weeks ago.

Moorhead has definitely been challenged as a border community, with at one point losing over 100 businesses to North Dakota in a two-year period in the late 80's. We do not want to see this happen to our community again. These last three years since I have been in Moorhead, we have seen a resurgence in business activity and business confidence. We truly hope we can get through this without devastating results.

Again, I do not want this to seem critical or challenging the State decisions thus far. However, locally we are in a tough spot and trying to help the best we can. Having an opportunity for our businesses to be heard and the consideration of a regional approach would be greatly appreciated. We have seen other States across the country, like New York and Illinois, implement a regional approach as they have determined each regional is affected differently. We encourage the State of Minnesota follow a similar approach to support our greater Minnesota businesses.

Lastly, safety is first and foremost and our businesses know this. These business owners are amazing and certainly do not want to put themselves, their employees, and their customers at risk. The creative spirit is alive in Moorhead and I hope we can find ways to allow it to prosper in these challenging times.

Thank you and all the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D LaPoint", written over a horizontal line.

Derrick LaPoint  
President/CEO  
Downtown Moorhead Inc.  
218-443-1361

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D Anderson", written over a horizontal line.

Dave Anderson  
Chairman of the Board  
Downtown Moorhead Inc.