

To: Commercial Landlords Operating in the _____ District:

I am writing as the President of the _____ Business Association representing the _____ businesses in our district and their _____ workers.

The COVID-19 crisis is devastating local businesses and destroying livelihoods across our City. With the current 'Stay Home, Save Lives' order from Governor Brown, our businesses have had no choice but to face plummeting sales and employee layoffs. Many businesses have been forced to temporarily close or sharply reduce activity. Because of this, our neighborhood businesses are facing a severe short-term cash flow problem.

I ask that you work with your commercial tenants to find creative solutions and adjustments so that our neighborhood businesses will remain viable through the end of this crisis. It may be necessary to reduce or defer rent, add months to the end of the lease in lieu of payment for coming months, or accept in-kind or barter payments. In doing so, you will help preserve the unique character of our business district and ensure our neighbors can thrive when this crisis has passed.

I recognize that you are faced with your own monthly financial obligations. However, if we allow this crisis to destroy the small businesses in our district, the result will be a complete glut of long-term vacancies. With few remaining businesses to fill them, customers will begin to avoid our district, crime will rise and property values will fall. A recent Venture Portland survey of 158 Portland neighborhood businesses reported an average 75% drop in revenue compared to the previous week. Businesses of all sizes laid off an average of 6 employees, and only 41 of those were able to offer meaningful sick leave payouts to furloughed workers. The commercial property owners in our district must act quickly to save our small businesses and keep our district a wonderful place to shop, work, play and live.

If there is any way I can assist in negotiating or mediating rent issues with tenants, please do not hesitate to reach out. I look forward to working together as we weather this crisis.

Respectfully,