

RE: Expand Construction and Manufacturing Under “Safe Start – Stay Healthy”

We are writing today to request that construction and manufacturing in Phase 1 counties be immediately permitted to work under Phase 2 safety requirements outlined in gubernatorial proclamation 20-25.4 known as “Safe Start – Stay Healthy.” As our communities earnestly engage in “mask-up to open-up” efforts for retail, food service, and other industries with a high level of public interaction, a large portion of our economy which has already been successful in masking-up and enforcing strict safety protocols has been left behind.

Since the effective date of “Stay Home – Stay Healthy,” essential portions of construction and manufacturing have continued across Washington with no ties to the spread of COVID-19. Limited public interaction, exhaustive safety protocols, and a workforce experienced in adopting new safety directives have allowed these industries to prove their ability to effectively prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Yakima County’s unique position as one of Washington’s largest agricultural producers has garnered it an equally unique position during the COVID-19 pandemic. The construction and manufacturing work which has not been permitted to continue under the current Phase 1 rule accounts for most of Yakima County’s 5,082 initial jobless claims filed in these sectors since early March. Allowing these sectors to move forward now will alleviate much of the financial peril facing Yakima families, the State of Washington, and local governments.

Manufacturing and construction in Yakima County must be permitted to move forward immediately. With stringent safety protocols already in place, an established track record of compliance, and an exemplary history of stopping the transmission of COVID-19, these industries stand as a local model for what can be accomplished with high compliance rates. Our work will continue as a community to implement safety measures that protect all of us with the hope that others in our community will see the work done by these industries to protect their workforce and re-open the Yakima Valley.

Sincerely,



Chelsea Snodgrass  
Executive Officer



**CWHBA.org**

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