



Date Adopted

Committee

May 20, 2020

Administrative

RESOLUTION URGING GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY TO RE-OPEN THE COUNTY OF SALEM

WHEREFORE, Pursuant to several Executive Orders, Governor Phil Murphy has essentially shut down all business operations and recreational activities in the County of Salem due to the COVID-19 virus, leaving the County of Salem completely frozen economically since March 9, 2020; and

WHEREFORE, Governor Murphy's Orders are oppressive and place undue restrictions on the Constitutional rights afforded to all residents of the County of Salem such as the inherent rights of freedom of religion, freedom to assemble and the freedom to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREFORE, Salem County is uniquely vulnerable economically in that it consists of mainly small businesses and farms and thus the working families of our County are in dire need of immediate re-opening of our businesses to support our economic well-being; too many of our residents remain out of work and are struggling to support themselves and their families during this time; and

WHEREFORE, the COVID-19 pandemic has also created a backlog in the State unemployment system, preventing our residents from filing for benefits and also from receiving their money, which has also created an undue hardship on the financial stability on the residents of the County of Salem; and

WHEREFORE, This situation not only impacts the County financially, but it also has an adverse impact on the mental and emotional well-being on our citizens; and

WHEREFORE, The implementation of said orders have different impacts on areas throughout the State of New Jersey and should not be enforced in a uniform manner throughout the State; For example, the County of Salem, is entirely unique to the northern regions of the State and therefore should not be confined to the same rules and restrictions that have been placed on more populous regions; and

WHEREFORE, Current statistics suggest that Salem County has suffered a mild outbreak of the COVID-19 virus and a downward trend is underway. The County's total positive cases represent just .06% of Salem County's population; and

WHEREFORE, While the Governor has established a Task Force to assist in the re-opening of the State of New Jersey, it does not represent the interests of the County of Salem. There is no one representing small business or agriculture on the panel and these areas of business represent most of Salem County; thus the citizens of the County of Salem are demanding their voices be heard and interests defended at the State level; and

WHEREFORE, on May 18, 2020, Governor Murphy unveiled a multi-stage approach to execute a responsible and strategic restart of New Jersey's Economy, consisting of a three-stage process, guided by plans for a methodical and strategic reopening of businesses and activities based on level of disease transmission risk and essential classification; and

WHEREFORE, President Trump's "Opening Up America Again" guidance suggests that State and local officials need to tailor re-opening plans to local circumstances (e.g. rural and suburban areas where outbreaks have not occurred or have been mild should be re-opened more quickly than more metropolitan areas); and

WHEREFORE, The Governor of the State of New Jersey should heed the federal recommendations and guidance and allow for the immediate reopening of areas of mild outbreak, such as the County of Salem, so as to encourage economic activity so desperately needed throughout our State and to allow citizens to restore a semblance of normality; and

WHEREFORE, Other States, such as Delaware and Rhode Island, are more similar to the socio-economic structure of the County of Salem and have already successfully implemented re-opening plans and therefore that precedent should be followed more closely for our region; and

WHEREFORE Consensus has been built by and between our business community and our Municipal and County governments to accept this reality and work with the State and its administration on a reopening that invests in the safety of the community and the dampening of spread of the virus; and

WHEREFORE, In furtherance thereof, Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders has established a task force to assist with the re-opening of public facilities and businesses within the County, which has determined that NOW is the time to open the County of Salem and will assist the County in developing economic recovery strategies to assist our businesses in furtherance thereof; and

WHEREFORE, while the County of Salem does not condone civil disobedience, it does recognize and acknowledge the frustration of its residents to the oppressive nature and unconstitutionality of the restrictions placed upon them by the Governor of the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREFORE, The County of Salem is urging that the Governor of the State of New Jersey permit ALL businesses to re-open immediately, subject to mitigation protocols to provide for the safety and wellness of its residents or in the alternative to all the County of Salem or in the alternative to allow the County of Salem to immediately open pursuant to Stage 3 as per the May 18, 2020 implementation plan as referenced herein;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Salem hereby urges that Governor Phil Murphy immediately permit the County of Salem to open ALL businesses and recreational activities to the public at this time, subject to mitigation protocols to provide for the safety and wellness of its residents, or in the alternative to allow the County of Salem to immediately open pursuant to Stage 3 as per the May 18, 2020 implementation plan as referenced herein;

B. H. Laury

BENJAMIN H. LAURY, Freeholder Director
Board of Chosen Freeholders

R. Scott Griscom

R. SCOTT GRISCOM, Deputy Freeholder Director

Gordon J. Ostrum, Jr.

GORDON J. OSTRUM, JR., Freeholder

Charles V. Hassler

CHARLES V. HASSLER, Freeholder

Lee R. Ware

LEE R. WARE, Freeholder

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Salem at its meeting held on May 20, 2020.

Stacy L. Pennington

STACY L. PENNINGTON
Clerk of the Board

RECORD OF VOTE

FREEHOLDER	RESOLUTION MOVED	RESOLUTION SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
G. Ostrum, Jr.	✓		✓			
C. Hassler			✓			
L. Ware			✓			
R.S. Griscom		✓	✓			
B. Laury			✓			

✓ Indicates Vote

Department Initials kah