Dear SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE,

I'm a constituent and small business owner writing because I'm one of many businesses that has held out great hope for the Payroll Protection Plan’s (PPP) loan forgiveness provision. However, with a more thorough understanding of the rules as currently written, its apparent that there are major oversights in the plan that will force my business and other service and hospitality businesses around the state to take on potentially unforgivable debt while risking losing our employees for good.

Closing my business broke my heart, but I know, based on guidance from state and federal public health authorities, that it was the right thing to do to protect the health of my staff and my customers. Given our focus on health and safety, it’s frustrating to learn that the loan forgiveness provision carries with it the requirement that we return to full staffing levels by 8 weeks from loan disbursement or by June 30th, both of which are overly ambitious given the current reality on the ground.

There are so many variables that will affect my staffing levels far beyond when we are technically able to reopen. Demand is unlikely to return to pre-crisis levels anytime soon, as incomes dwindle from job loss and other economic fallout, and customers are not fully confident they can go about their regular business safely. On top of that, there is no way to know what the guidance from state and federal authorities will be 8 weeks from now, when we are supposed to be back to 100% pre-crises employment levels.

This recent piece in Forbes sums it up nicely:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewrigie/2020/04/03/no-seat-at-the-table-for-restaurants-cares-act-leaves-hospitality-industry-hanging/?fbclid=IwAR22O_mvYo_MLl8dj6UmL4vPW8QBqETOvAelxIKjwmGaiHyz_apqheavHY4#685faf324558>

Some have suggested I just pay my staff to sit at home - but with the new federal unemployment supplement of $600/week on top of what my staff is already getting from the state, I'd be asking them to take a pay cut to stay with me, hence the risk of my losing them for good once this crisis is over. My small business cannot support simply paying them more to overcome this economic hurdle – not without reliable grant funding.

For this program to work as intended, we need more time to staff up – 8 weeks from loan origination is insufficient. We need at least 6 months from the time the government orders are lifted to start our 8 week grant period. And we also need better guidance on the Unemployment provisions so we can develop a return-to-work strategy that is fair for our staff.

In short, we need to ensure rule changes that create a rational economic environment for small businesses so we can do our part in reviving the economy.

I'd love to talk to you about how the PPP will play out for my business. My contact details are below.

Regards,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR BUSINESS NAME]

[YOUR BUSINESS ADDRESS/CONTACT INFO]