



# GreatLakesFloral ASSOCIATION

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May 15, 2020

Honorable Governor Gretchen Whitmer  
P.O. Box 30013  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

It's time for our flower shops to open their doors. Other Retailers have proven they can operate safely, keeping both their employees and customers safe. Michigan's economy is driven in part by retail florists and we need to get them reopened and fully back to work.

Curbside pickup and delivery are only temporary solutions for our industry. Simply put, Michigan's brick and mortar retail florists need customers in their stores. Our members heavily rely on sales from Easter, Mother's Day, and Memorial Day to sustain their spring business.

We know your utmost concern is the safety of the people of Michigan, which is ours as well. We are confident our florists can implement the proper safety requirements so all individuals can safely enter into their stores. Currently all consumer traffic is occurring at essential businesses, with customers often waiting to enter as space allows. Opening flower shops will alleviate the congestion at essential retailers, allowing for a more natural form of consumer social distancing.

Several states similarly situated to Michigan have either already reopened flower shops or are on the verge of doing so. Michigan should be no different. Indiana and Wisconsin reopened on May 11 and Ohio reopened on May 12. Minnesota is set to reopen on May 18 and Kentucky is reopening on May 20. We have developed and tested best practices to keep shoppers safe. Those best practices, many of which you've included in Executive Orders, have prevented outbreaks and kept workers and customers healthy. They can be implemented in Michigan, just as our neighboring states have done.

It will take time for consumers to regain confidence and financial stability to start spending again, so the sooner we reopen the doors and get people back to work, the sooner we will see a positive impact in revenue. With our economic engine shut off, we will continue to lose critical sales tax and income tax dollars that fund our schools and provide state and local services to taxpayers.

Our florists can open safely and are ready to do so. Flower shops in our neighboring states have reopened or set dates to reopen, florists in Michigan should do the same. We urge you to allow for flower shops to reopen before the Memorial Day weekend.

Sincerely,

Rodney P. Crittenden  
EVP/CEO  
Great Lakes Floral Association