

Club Fit Fitness
PO Box 936
Canby Oregon 97013

February 5, 2021

Dear Chair Manning and members of the committee,

We are writing today to express our support for SB 531.

The Canby Area Chamber of Commerce represents over 260 members who are committed growing business opportunities and providing living-wage jobs for families in our community. We support entrepreneurs and the jobs they create.

This past year has been a difficult one for our business community. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in wide-spread changes to our daily lives, and ultimately, on our ability to do business.

With the onset of COVID-19, Governor Brown issued Executive Order 20-12, which shuttered many of our local businesses in the interest of protecting public health and slowing the spread of this virus. These closures resulted in many businesses suffering extensive losses. It meant laying off employees, losing inventory, losing customers, and for some, it meant losing their business entirely.

Club Fit Fitness, Canby's only fitness center provides essential health to our community offering physical therapy, cardiac & stroke rehabilitation, mental health strategies, occupational therapy and is a provider for Medicare Advantage Mobility programs. The community and mental & physical health this venue provides had a devastating effect on the senior population as many of those members rely on special fitness equipment to maintain the basic mobility that many of us take for granite. Being forced to close twice for a total of 4.5 months has been devastating for the business and the community. These closures have impacted the staff of 15 professionals who need their jobs and the ability for the business to continue to support them and itself at full operation. The fear that has been put in the member through the closures has reduced membership to levels of 15 years ago thus crippling the revenues for years to come. The loss to our membership based structure is 200 thousand dollars for 2020 and is expected to reduce revenues by 100K for 2021 and will take years to rebuild the lost base. The really sad part is that we've learned through many national studies that fitness venues are NOT a source of infection and so the damage through closures is far greater than the threat of the virus. Our very own University of Oregon did an independent study (attached below) along with other studies in New York and Colorado have shown proof of this. Looking at the Oregon Health Authority's weekly reports also show proof of this. Large retailers have stayed open even with outbreaks. This can never happen again & we will need support through replaced income in order to survive and rebuild and our 5th amendment provides us that right.

<https://www.ihrsa.org/improve-your-club/industry-news/university-research-gyms-are-low-risk-for-covid-transmission/>

When businesses are closed due to public health emergencies like COVID-19, it is important that the State help those businesses recover. Our local businesses are the life-blood of our community and our economy, especially our small and mid-sized businesses who have shouldered the greatest weight of these closures. We feel it is important for these businesses to be made whole. This is why we support SB 531.

SB 531 would allow businesses to be reimbursed for closures made during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses sacrificed their livelihoods in order to protect the health of Oregonians. In turn, we should help these businesses - and the jobs they provide - survive.

We hope you will stand with businesses in this state and support SB 531.

Sincerely,

Barb Raines, Owner
Club Fit Fitness, Canby Area Chamber Member