

I support HB 3177 as a way to help the small businesses in our state that have been unnecessarily impacted by COVID-19 related restrictions. I live in Brookings, which is a coastal town that is economically dependent on tourism and also has a large number of senior citizens. Our small businesses need to be open, with appropriate precautions, for our local economy to survive this pandemic. Gyms and fitness classes must be allowed to be open again in order to keep our seniors engaged and physically active and healthy. They, and our restaurants and gift shops, do not have the economic resources to weather long-term closures. I fear that the end result of being overly cautious about COVID-19 risks will be the death of our small businesses and a decline in the health of our population, especially seniors. I have personally witnessed the mental and physical decline of a very good friend that was the result of her not being able to go to her fitness facility for regular exercise. Please help correct this by passing HB 3177 out of committee. Thank you.