

Our small coastal community is struggling mightily with the seemingly never-ending roller coaster opening and closing of our restaurants.

- Employees (along with many owners) are unable to take advantage of unemployment benefits because of the open/close every two weeks

- oMore so, employees grapple to find child care on a two-week basis. Child care providers are unable to count on income from these employees

- oAnd, the justification in closing these businesses cannot be documented.

- Visitors frequent our town – to breathe the fresh air, and walk on the beaches, stay in lodging facilities – and of course, they need to eat. If they are only able to eat on their knees in take-out containers in their rooms, they are much more reluctant to make plans to visit, or more so, come back again – knowing their choices are incredibly limited.

- That in turn, diminishes our TOT funds, which affects all levels of those that benefit from those dollars. Our city' general fund is hampered in paying for our law enforcement and our street repairs, we are unable to market our region as there are limited funds due to lack of visitors, and the State Travel Tourism agency doesn't receive funding.

All of this creates a lop-sided marketplace, where the restaurants are the weak link in the package of marketing and being a hospitable host. The shops, the supplier to the shops, the charter boats, the tour operators, and I can go on and on, to include all of the threads that create our town's fabric – that will feel the shattering of a fragile economy that we will encounter, if the restaurants are not allowed to remain safely open.

Thank you. Please vote in favor of HB3177