

May 15th, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor of Ohio
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Dear Governor DeWine:

Please respond to this urgent request for the creation of an Ohio Special Events Advisory Group, a task force who can speak to the unique challenges of safely reopening controlled private gatherings of 300 people or less. As the Government has used this method in addressing these challenges for restaurant, bar, and personal care proprietors, we too ask the same consideration.

Nationally, the wedding & events industry is worth over \$60 Billion. Event production serves, employs and tertiary affects millions of Ohio constituents and nearly every facet of the economy, including: tourism, hospitality, real estate, food service, transportation, beauty/wellness, photography, entertainment, and more. Wedding and event professionals are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 related closures and face distinctly different challenges from other forms of commerce, the full measure of which is impossible to comprehend without first-hand experience in our field.

This industry is driven by sole proprietorships who are being omitted from unemployment statistics, disqualified from existing government assistance, and facing unprecedented hardship. The demand for our services has been eradicated and carrying the fiscal and emotional responsibility without having the support of lawmakers is devastating. That damage to this portion of Ohio's workforce is overwhelming.

The decline, and potential failure, of our industry would have irreversible detrimental impact on the vibrancy of Ohio and solutions to the contrary must be targeted. Therefore, we offer our expertise to supplement that of medical professionals with the following objectives:

1. Develop a phased approach to reopening
2. Establish realistic best practices to be instituted across disciplines
3. Clarify the manner in which policies specifically impact our ability to conduct business
4. Support forward progress towards a sustainable reopening
5. Allow owners to make informed, pragmatic decisions both in service of their clients and the future of their business

The diversion of attention from this matter, coupled with a lack of contributonal opportunity from sympathetic, experienced leadership ultimately demoralizes current and potential small business owners. Our state has been a leader in response to this pandemic. We implore you to uphold the precedent you have set by addressing these emergent concerns.

Please establish an Ohio Special Events Advisory Group immediately. Please direct your response to:

Berlyn Martin
Berlyn Events & Design
[REDACTED]
info@ohioeventsafety.com

Jennifer Drew
StR Events
[REDACTED]

Respectfully,



Berlyn Martin on behalf of
Advocates for Ohio Event Safety
FOUNDING SUPPORTERS:

/s/ Jennifer Drew
Owner,
StR Events
Franklin County

/s/ John W “Squire” Galbreath
President,
Darby Dan Farm
Franklin County

/s/ Larry Clark
Owner,
Made From Scratch
Union County

/s/ James P. Fritz
President,
Lasting Impressions Event Rentals (Cleveland)
Cuyahoga County

/s/ Britney Heffelfinger
President,
Columbus National Association for Live Events
Franklin County

President,
Lasting Impressions Event Rentals (Columbus)
Franklin County

Director of Banquets,
Le Meridien Columbus, The Joseph
Franklin County

President,
The Alleen Company
Hamilton County

/s/ Carl R Seiley
President,
Vue Columbus
Franklin County

/s/ Beth Kerechanin
Owner,
Seth & Beth Photography
Medina County

/s/ Steve Rayo

CEO,
dock580
Franklin County

/s/ Meggie Francisco

Owner & Creative Director,
Meggie Francisco Events
Franklin County

/s/ John A Brooks

Managing Partner,
BTTS Holdings Inc.
Franklin County

/s/ Christopher Jespersen

Owner,
The Madison
Cuyahoga County

Owner,
Storybox Cinema
Cuyahoga County

/s/ Courtney Heibel

Owner,
Rooted Together Events
Franklin County

/s/ Josh Staley

Owner,
Josh Staley Productions
Franklin County

Owner
The Postmark
Ross County

/s/ Tanya Irelan

Owner,
Tanya Irelan Events
Delaware County

/s/ Brigid Horne-Nestor

Owner,
i-do Weddings & Events
Hamilton County

/s/ Allison Fate Leonard

Owner/President,
Kismet Visuals & Co.
Franklin County

/s/ Ashley Henry

Owner,
Henry Photography
Knox County

/s/ Olivia DelGarbino

Event Director,
Swan Lake Event Center
Franklin County

/s/ Randy Scheib

Director of Rental & Production,
Vincent Lighting Systems
Cuyahoga County

/s/ Tessa Berg

Owner,
Starling Studio
Delaware County

/s/ Natasha Churches

Owner,
Aisle & Co.
Franklin County

/s/ Meleka Jolliff

Owner,
Aiden & Grace
Franklin County

/s/ Stacy Terman

Vice President of Operations
Milo's Catering
Franklin County

/s/ Coty Henry

Owner & Manager,
Magnolia Hill Farm
Knox County

/s/ Dora Manuel

Owner/President,
Viva Bella Events
Hamilton County

/s/ Elisa MacKenzie

Owner & Master Wedding Planner (MWP),
Elegant Events by Elisa
Hamilton County

/s/ Rayna Wallen

Owner,
Lunasa Events
Hamilton County