

California Legislature

October 09, 2020
The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

We are writing to request that you reevaluate the status of California's Bowling Centers under the Blueprint for a Safer Economy, in order to aid in the responsible re-opening of an integral part of many local communities. Currently, bowling centers, categorized as Family Entertainment Centers under the enacted Blueprint, are not allowed to re-open until their county falls under the moderate and minimal tiers. As outlined further in this letter, classifying bowling as a Fitness and Physical Activity Facility would permit minimal operation for counties in the substantial tier, as well as, acknowledge the positive health impacts which bowling can provide to people of all ages, economic status and disabilities. We believe the reevaluation of these centers will lead to greater operations in a safe and healthy manner that can be accomplished in alignment with CDPH guidance.

California's bowling proprietors share in the commitment to protect the health and safety of all Californians as evidenced by the strong commitment to safety protocols and measures taken earlier this year. Responsibly re-opening bowling centers in limited capacity under that of substantial, moderate and minimal tiers as a physical activity facility can be done consistent with health and safety protocols deemed for other operations in this classification. It would go a long way to restoring some semblance of normalcy into our lives, providing much needed economic relief to employers and employees and increase physical activity that is crucial during this pandemic. In fact, bowling is frequented by members of various groups, including the Wheelchair Bowling Association (<https://awba.org>) and Blind Bowling Association (www.abba1951.com). Also, while not being an Olympic sport, bowling is one of the most popular Special Olympics sports. During this extraordinary time, when people might feel more isolated than ever, physical activity provides an essential mental health benefit for many Californians. Bowling center owners can play a small but crucial part in this state's mental, social and economic recovery.

We appreciate the efforts of state and local officials over the past several weeks to bend the curve and allow counties more flexibility and control over COVID-19 restrictions. The Blueprint for a Safer Economy is the product of these efforts, and communities across the state heed your guidance for a statewide, simple and slow reopening plan. As much has been learned and changed about COVID-19 since the initial shutdown more than 6 months ago, bowling center owners have too continued to pursue additional modifications to health and safety protocols, which based in data and new technology, could permit safe operations in coordination with county health data.

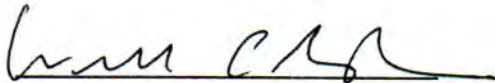


Across our nation, bowling centers have already operated at safely reduced capacities, with face coverings and physical distancing requirements. Additionally at locations throughout California, where permitted to operate, these businesses have been successful in opening without being a source of transmission. We urge the Administration to closely consider the size of most bowling centers being on average 35,000 sq.ft, the success of implementing social distancing guidelines, increased cleaning measures and the like when evaluating the classification of bowling centers into fitness and physical activity facilities under the Blueprint.

Again, we all share a commitment to health and safety and letting science and data guide decisions and direction. With proper implementation, the re-opening of California's bowling centers is possible. Doing so will not only provide safe, physical activity for people of all ages and abilities, but also help put Californians back to work.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



William P. Brough
Assemblyman, 73rd Assembly District



Patricia C. Bates
Senator, 36th Senate District



Kevin Kiley
Assemblyman, 6th Assembly District



Devon Mathis
Assemblyman, 26th Assembly District

CC: California Health and Human Services, Secretary, Dr. Mark Ghaly MD, MPH
California Department of Public Health, Acting Director, Sandra Shewry, MPH, MSW