GLYNN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
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April 6, 2020

VIA U.S. MAIL AND EMAIL

The Honorable Brian Kemp
Governor of the State of Georgia
206 Washington Street
Suite 203, State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Governor Kemp:

On behalf of the Glynn County Board of Commissioners, as the governing authority of Glynn County, Georgia, I want to thank you for your continued efforts to protect the citizens and wellbeing of the state of Georgia during the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic. As Governor during this unprecedented time, we recognize that you have tremendous responsibilities and are tasked with making difficult decisions affecting the entire state.

To prevent the further spread of this disease and the impacts of this event, including the potential for significant loss of life, we implore and urge you to reconsider your decision in Executive Order 04.02.20.01 to suspend enforcement of local ordinances and orders related to COVID-19. While we applaud your “shelter in place” directive as the correct move, additional immediate actions are necessary. Many of the suspended local ordinances and orders are more restrictive than your Executive Order and go further in their efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Georgia is about to enter into the critical phase of this pandemic, and this is the time to be tightening restrictions that combat the spread of this disease, not loosening them. Just yesterday, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams stressed the importance of this coming week to the United States and stated that “this is going to be the hardest and the saddest week of most Americans’ lives, quite frankly. This is going to be our Pearl Harbor moment, our 9/11 moment, only it’s not going to be localized.”

We are deeply concerned that your Executive Order will have a chilling effect on local government’s efforts to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and take the additional actions deemed necessary by counties and cities to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. For instance, the state’s decision to open the beaches back up to the public, combined with the Executive Order’s suspension of Glynn County’s ability to address short-term rental matters, encourages travel into Glynn County from other areas and increases the likelihood that COVID-19 will spread in our community at a greater rate. Increases in the rate of spread comparable to other affected areas, as well as increases in the number of individuals falling ill within the county, will greatly strain our resources and the capabilities of Glynn County’s public safety functions and health care system.
Local governments throughout Georgia need to be able to act quickly and decisively during this event. We are asking that you permit counties and cities to enforce local emergency ordinances and orders pertaining to COVID-19 that are stricter than that the provisions of your Executive Order(s). Time is of the essence, and the Glynn County Board of Commissioners respectfully requests your immediate action on this matter.

The Glynn County Board of Commissioners thanks you in advance for your consideration of the concerns and request set forth herein. Should you have any questions, or if you would like to discuss the specifics of this request, please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Sincerely,

Michael Browning
Chairman
Glynn County Board of Commissioners

c: Senator William Ligon (via email)
Representative Don Hogan (via email)
Representative Jeff Jones (via email)
Cornell Harvey, Mayor, City of Brunswick (via email)
Van Johnson, Mayor, City of Savannah (via email)
Shirley Sessions, Mayor, City of Tybee Island (via email)
Jimmy Starline, Chair, Camden County Board of Commissioners (via email)
Albert J. Scott, Chairman, Chatham County Board of Commissioners (via email)
Glynn County Board of Commissioners (via email)