

Gaston County  
Board of Commissioners  
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Ronnie Worley  
South Point Township

Dr. Kim S. Eagle  
County Manager

Jonathan L. Sink  
County Attorney

Charles L. Moore  
County Attorney

Donna S. Buff  
Clerk to the Board

*Mission Statement  
Gaston County seeks to be  
among the finest counties in  
North Carolina. It will provide  
effective, efficient and  
affordable services leading  
to a safe, secure and healthy  
community, an environment  
for economic growth, and  
promote a favorable quality  
of life.*

## GASTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

April 9, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper  
North Carolina Office of the Governor  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Cooper:

First of all, on behalf of the Gaston County Board of Commissioners and the citizens of Gaston County, we are praying for you and your team as you navigate through this challenge and make difficult decisions that impact every person in North Carolina. Your prompt response to all of my previous correspondence, whether via text message or personal call, is very much appreciated.

I write to you today with a request on how to move forward once the stay-at-home order has expired at the end of April.

Based on our previous communication, I know you are keenly aware of the ramifications the restrictions are having on our economy and the morale of our citizens. Like you, not a day goes by that I don't hear from a business owner that is worried how they can keep the lights on. The shutdown and uncertainty is causing a disruption that could take years to recover from. Because of that, I would like to formally request that you once again allow counties to make decisions on how to proceed.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The government closest to the people serves the people best." As you know, every county is not the same. We all have health directors and other professional staff who know our counties and people best.

I firmly believe that Gaston County, along with each of the other 99 counties, can best decide on how to address the risk in each of our home territories.

We would continue to work with our local Health Director and hospital systems to closely monitor capacity. We still plan to limit gatherings, promote proper sanitation efforts, and mandate safe social distancing guidelines to help keep our citizens safe. We can do this while also allowing our people to fully get back to work.

In short, I believe counties can monitor and deal with this situation at the local level more effectively and efficiently than the State can.

Again, thank you for all you are doing. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. L. Philbeck", enclosed in a blue oval.

Tracy L. Philbeck, Chairman  
Gaston County Board of Commissioners  
704-813-1902

cc: 99 NC Counties