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BEAUFORT COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA

April 23, 2020

*Via Electronic Mail*

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

Dear Governor Cooper,

On behalf of the residents of Beaufort County, thank you and your administration for all your hard work in addressing the many unique and difficult challenges created by the COVID-19 virus. The actions initially taken on a statewide basis to confront the virus outbreak and help “flatten the curve” appear to be successful and are helping provide surge capacity within our healthcare system. These early actions have given us the benefit of time and information about the virus. We must now use that information to help restart our economy in a safe and coordinated manner.

I write you today with the support of the Beaufort County Board of Commissioners about how best to move forward upon the expiration or rescinding of your Executive Order 121. We understand and support the need to continue to slow the spread of the virus and to protect our most vulnerable populations. We also support and trust the strong public health network established in Beaufort County by our County Health Director and his team. Our local Health Department, as it has done for years with other communicable diseases, is reviewing local metrics and data collected on the COVID-19 virus and using that information to take actions to inform and protect our citizens.

In the same manner that we support our local public health activities, we must also consider the extreme hardship placed on our local economies by the impact of the COVID-19 virus. We often talk about the economy as a social determinant of health factor affecting the health of our residents, and the economic strain is exacerbating these factors, and disproportionately the poorer populations. Our normal economies face the inherent challenges of rural eastern North Carolina and while local businesses have adapted to those challenges, without the ability to get back to work in a safe and coordinated manner, those businesses will not be able to survive. Our fragile rural economies must begin the process of rebuilding.

We need your help moving forward by empowering county governments with future decision-making authority to take actions locally to reopen our economies in a safe manner and to work with our citizens to bring normalcy back to Beaufort County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jerry Evans".

Jerry Evans, Chairman  
cc: Beaufort County Board of Commissioners