

From: [BOS Public Comment](#)
To: [All BOS Board Members](#)
Cc: [Alison Lehman](#); [Mali Dyck](#)
Subject: FW: [QUARANTINE] Local food business
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 11:24:38 AM
Importance: Low

District 3

From: Tyler Freeland [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 11:01 AM
To: BOS Public Comment <BOS.PublicComment@co.nevada.ca.us>; bdofsupervisors <bdofsupervisors@co.nevada.ca.us>
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Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to you as a local business owner, concerned about the future in a COVID-19 world. I am an attorney practicing here in Nevada County, and my partner owns a food business called Kaliko's Hawaiian Kitchen. I currently reside in District 3.

In late 2016, my partner Tyler and I started Kaliko's Hawaiian Kitchen. I was 9 months pregnant with our son (Kaliko). Tyler had been working in local restaurants for over a decade, but was wanting to strive for and achieve more. Inspired by other successful food businesses here in our county, we decided to start a food booth to sell food at local events. Our first event ever was Victorian Christmas. Within the year, Kaliko's Hawaiian Kitchen's business skyrocketed, and we ended up opening up a small brick and mortar location in Nevada City. Things did not work out for us there, but the "mobile" aspect of our business where we are booked to sell food at large street fairs and music festivals continued to explode and thrive. A businesses that we started with less than \$5000, went on to gross more than six figures in the first year. And that growth has continued steadily in the last three years.

In just three years, we have accomplished so much. We sell food at some of the largest music festivals in the state. The beauty of our business is that we get to travel to various locations throughout California, but still bring the money we make back to the spend in the local economy here in Nevada County where I have lived for nearly seven years and Tyler has lived for almost 20 years. For someone like Tyler who does not have a college degree, this business is an amazing testament to what hard work, grit, and determination will bring to those who try. He earns more from this business in one year than he would working 3-5 years as a cook in a local restaurant.

And, we are not the only successful local mobile food business in this situation. We have several

good friends in this business locally who support their families entirely and comfortably from the money made selling food at events. The uncertainty of the future of large events has left my partner Tyler in tears.

COVID-19 has put a stop to all large gatherings for the foreseeable future and like so many of our fellow small business owners we are facing an uncertain time. The difficulty we face is that unlike a restaurant, we are left without the ability to "pivot" to do curbside pick up on a regular basis. We recently were able to do a successful pop-up in Truckee with Alibi Aleworks where we were able to offer our food on their menu through their kitchen for curbside pick up, all the while limiting social contact and taking all safety precautions. While the money we made from this pop up was only a drop in the bucket in comparison of what our business grosses at a large festival, that small amount helps our family tremendously during these times.

My question to you is: how will the county help to implement measures to keep businesses like ours alive, and what can be done to help us "pivot" while events are temporarily on hold? Can the Board of Supervisors encourage Environmental Health to allow us to set up our booth at a safe location in the county and offer curbside pick up? This alone could help our businesses survive.

I feel that it is time to consider all options available.

In 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed AB 626 into law which allowed for "microenterprise" food businesses to legally sell 60 meals prepared at home per week. The legislative intent was to allow for greater access to the food industry to "minority" groups so often facing huge barriers to entry into the restaurant industry because of high start up costs of commercial kitchens. But, AB 626 left it up to each county's Environmental Health department as to whether or not they wanted to implement the program. Thus far, Nevada County has chosen NOT to implement this program. And, if I am being honest... I can see why the EH department would choose not to enact such a program because it does mean more work. However, the benefit to local food entrepreneurs would be **tremendous** and would allow for so many to build a solid small food business just as we have.

In our community, access to commercial kitchen for businesses like ours is challenging. Many dream of opening a food business, but cannot find a suitable kitchen share, let alone shoulder the high costs. I know of food businesses in this county who are essentially operating outside of the law from home and are successful. Can we really fault them for wanting to support their family? Simply implementing AB 626 would allow them to become legitimate.

While I can understand why COVID-19 safety precautions would possibly not support allowing food entrepreneurs to operate from home at this time, perhaps the county can facilitate access to commercial kitchens (I can provide in greater detail why it is a challenge for us in a later email) so that mobile food businesses can offer curbside pick up and delivery during this time? Perhaps the county can temporarily allow for a safe "pop-up" for a limited amount of food booths/temporary food facilities where orders can be taken online and the food picked up curbside.

Kaliko's Hawaiian Kitchen has a strong following here in Nevada County, and this local community supports us so much.

I could go on for many more paragraphs because I feel so passionately about our business and the hurdles we face now and will continue to face in the months to come. If there is an opportunity for me to speak with one of you, or provide a more in-depth letter or in-address, please let me know.

Best regards,

Megan Sasaki

Aloha,

Tyler & Megan

