April 9th, 2020

Dear Governor Whitmer,

Re: Executive Order 2020-21 Greenhouses/Landscapers

As we all are aware, our state is in the midst of a highly contagious and deadly disease. This unprecedented emergency requires an unprecedented response. We appreciate your leadership during this challenging time.

While I understand that Executive Order 2020-21 was made in the best interest of our state’s public health, it has come to my attention that many local greenhouses and landscaping businesses are being treated unfairly under this mandate.

Under your Executive Order, greenhouses are currently permitted to care for their plants, but are forbidden from selling to the public. These small businesses are being prevented from pursuing their livelihoods, while the big-box stores down the road are in full operation, selling the very same plants and gardening items that would be available from greenhouses or landscapers.

I believe this is an injustice that warrants your immediate scrutiny. As an example, my local greenhouses are prohibited from selling me grass seed. To make the point, I personally went to Home Depot in Lapeer and was able to buy a bag of the very same product with no limitations.

I hope you can empathize with how frustrating this is to our small greenhouses and landscaping businesses.

I appreciate that you and your staff have been helpful throughout this process in clarifying what industries are essential. I am respectfully requesting that you carefully assess the inconsistency I have pointed out, and that you allow greenhouses and landscapers to once again sell to the public, just as you are allowing the big-box stores to do. I hope that you will agree with me that it makes little sense to kill off our small businesses while reinforcing the monopoly of big chain stores - which draw much larger crowds with a higher potential to spread the virus.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I wholly understand the many pressures you face as you make difficult decisions affecting our fellow citizens. I would ask that you please help us prevent this crisis from becoming a disaster for our local greenhouses and landscapers.

Sincerely,

Gary Howell
State Representative
82nd District – Lapeer County