

## **The Rhode Island Golf Alliance**

March 21, 2020

Rhode Island State House  
Office of the Governor Room 115  
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

Dear Governor Raimondo and Lieutenant Governor McKee:

On behalf of the golf industry in Rhode Island, we are prepared and ready to do our part to respond to the recent COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. We understand the challenging task that the Governor's Office has in trying to keep our economy running and ensuring our state's inhabitants remain and feel safe.

As your Office continues to monitor the situation, we understand that strongly recommended or mandatory closures of gathering places (such as restaurants, bars, gyms, etc.) might be something businesses will have to consider doing as preventative measures, whether strongly recommended or mandatory. We all will do what is necessary, but the golf course industry is a bit different.

The clubhouse, which represents the golf shop, restaurant and/or bar area is a small part of the greater purpose and imprint of a golf course. We believe that the golf course itself shouldn't be treated the same as the service areas of a golf course's enterprise.

There are plenty of opportunities for people to perform social distancing on a golf course. Golf course operators have been using extra caution and taking serious steps to ensure playing golf during this pandemic is a healthy, secure and touchless experience. They all have been following the guidelines being put forth by state and local agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These facilities are adjusting their food and beverage systems to follow all suggested and mandated restrictions, which include take-out food service and/or temporarily suspending food service altogether.

If there is to be a mandate to close businesses around the State to avoid the gathering of people, we respectfully direct you to the State of Michigan, where Governor Whitmer just recently mandated closing many different types of businesses, but allowed golf courses to remain open.

In these tough times, golf has been an outlet for people who have been laid off from work or are unable to be outdoors. We all need an outlet in stressful and uncertain situations and golf is providing that.

Thank you for your governance and leadership during these difficult times, Governor Raimondo and Lieutenant Governor McKee. We wish you nothing but the best as you look to protect and better our communities.

Respectfully,

The Rhode Island Golf Alliance

### **Inclusive of:**

**Rhode Island Golf Association, New England PGA, Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendent, New England Club Managers, New England Golf Course Owners Association, Button Hole, John P. Burke Scholarship Fund, URI Turf Program, Rhode Island Sod Farmers Association.**