



State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

May 4, 2020

The Honorable Ned Lamont
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT, 06106

Dear Governor Lamont:

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits. I know everyone is under pressure to do whatever they can to help the citizens of CT to get back to some level of normalcy after having lived with the COVID 19 viral pandemic. Much anguish has been experienced by our citizens who have had to learn to live life with much less freedom of movement and social interaction. Many have lost jobs and sadly in many cases families have lost loved ones to the virus' most egregious affects.

Some of the affects have been unforeseeable and the consequences have yet to be experienced. These unforeseen consequences will have the effect of exasperating the deleterious effects of this crisis.

One such example of an unforeseen consequence is the effect of the many increased fees the legislature has placed on our businesses and nonprofits. Recently, I received a letter from a concerned constituent who volunteers his time at one of our many ethnic clubs, the Harugari German American club in West Haven,

Clubs like Harugari are struggling to hold their head above water. Public Act 19-24, "An Act Streamlining the Liquor Control Act," signed into law on June 5, 2019 requires several liquor permit types to be repealed and reclassified as defined by Title 30 of the General Statutes. Establishments who are holders of a NON PROFIT CLUB LIQUOR permit and those permits are set to be repealed and reissued as a cafe liquor permit under General Statutes 30-22a. The renewal cafe liquor permit fee will be \$2000.00 instead of the previous fee of \$800.00. This fee increase is unreasonable as it represents a 150 % increase. Furthermore, the increase is being applied in an uneven manner in that those establishments who currently hold a Tavern liquor permit (LIT), will also have their liquor permits reissued as a cafe liquor permit. However, their renewal fee will increase incrementally over four years as follows:

Renewal year one: \$800.00
Year two: \$1,200.00
Year Three: \$1,600.00
Year Four: \$2,000.00

At a time when the nation is reeling from the economic, sociologic, and health effects of the COVID 19 viral pandemic, the effects of this are unreasonable and what appears to be targeted increase on Non-profit clubs are especially problematic. In addition to Harugari German American Club, other clubs that will be negatively impacted with this increase are the American Legions, VFWs, Elks Clubs, Polish American Clubs, Italian American Clubs and other such clubs.

It is difficult to say how many people as members of these clubs will be affected by the unforeseen consequences of this fee increase but it is fair to say that it would be tens of thousands. As we begin to heal from the effects of the viral pandemic it will be imperative to allow people to begin to once again come together to socialize and reconnect with each other. It will take a considerable amount of time for businesses to once again thrive at pre-COVID19 levels. In the meantime, I would recommend that the timing of this fee increase be revisited, and consideration be given to a moratorium on such fees as these establishments struggle to regain their pre-COVID economic stability. At the very least non-profits should be considered on equal basis with those establishments currently holding Tavern Licenses (LIT) and their increases should be incrementally increased in the same manner over four years.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you soon on your response to these concerns.

Sincerely,



Charles Ferraro
State Representative - CT 117



Kathy Kennedy
State Representative - CT 119