



**RETAIL  
INDUSTRY  
LEADERS  
ASSOCIATION**



**CALIFORNIA  
RETAILERS  
ASSOCIATION**  
Consumers Economy Jobs

**NRF**<sup>®</sup>  
NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION<sup>®</sup>

August 31, 2020

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of California's retail community, we are committed to working with you to tackle the challenges of fighting the spread of COVID-19 while keeping the economy open so we can put more Californians safely back to work. Our number one priority is the health and safety of employees and customers, and we want to continue working together to prevent a resurgence in infection rates.

During these challenging times, the retail industry has worked exceptionally hard to safely provide California residents with the goods and services they need. California retailers invested billions of dollars to implement new workplace safety protocols including occupancy limits, social distancing, installation of physical barriers at point of sale and sanitation stations, staggered work shifts, one-way shopping aisles, employee mask requirements, daily health screenings and temperature checks, and employee health and safety trainings. We were early champions for all Californians to wear masks in public spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Retailers also created and expanded ecommerce and delivery options, implementing curbside pickup and other contactless shopping options for customers physically unable or unwilling to wear a mask in public. Retailers made significant investments in these options to safely serve all members of the community throughout the pandemic.

Over the past five months, the retail industry has unequivocally demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the health and safety of its employees, customers and the communities we serve. Its investments have made the reopening of retail one of the few success stories in the economy and resulted in hundreds of thousands of Californians returning from furlough and earning a private-sector paycheck again.

In the guidance provided to governors in late spring, the National Retail Federation and the Retail Industry Leaders Association urged policymakers to consider reduced occupancy in stores as a means to safely begin reopening and end the arbitrary distinction of essential and nonessential retailers. The guidance of "no more than 50 percent and no less than 20 percent" represented a floor we considered overly prudent given our then-limited understanding of how COVID-19 is spread, and most Californians were not yet wearing masks in public. The scientific data has since proven the effectiveness and widespread acceptance of wearing masks, social distancing, store signage and safety equipment within stores to keep employees and customers safe.

We ask you to consider revising the latest guidance provided to retailers, particularly those stores located in purple-tiered counties. We believe with safety measures in place and customers abiding by the mask mandate, retailers can operate at 50 percent capacity and protect the health and well-being of employees, customers and the neighborhoods they serve.

Sincerely,

Rachel Michelin  
President & CEO  
California Retailers Association

Matthew Shay  
President & CEO  
National Retail Federation

Brian Dodge  
President  
Retail Industry Leaders Association