CRA call with Governor Jared Polis  
4/6/2020  
Speakers: Governor Jared Polis, Sonia Riggs President & CEO

**Governor Polis Introduction and Issue Discussion**

- We have extended collection and filing deadlines for certain state taxes, expedited unemployment insurance benefits, and we are grateful for PPP.
- We want to work with your industry to make sure your needs are in the phase 4 federal relief program.
- We want to make sure that you can re-hire your employees and return to business as usual once this is all over.

**Sonia Riggs, President & CEO**

- Loosening regulations wherever you can is very important to our industry right now. We appreciate the efforts you have already made, including working with us to allow alcohol takeout and delivery.
- But at this time, we really need access to cash; some people have heard from their banks that they can’t or won’t process PPP applications. Whatever you can do to help get these loans processed is greatly appreciated.
- We’d love to have feedback from any restaurant on additional things the local, state, and national governments can do to assist. We’ll communicate those ideas to the appropriate people.
- Based on what you know now, do you have any idea of when restaurants will be able to open for dine-in?  
  - Governor Polis: If we reopen too early, people will not go out because they are afraid of getting sick. And I hope that restaurants are taking the time to work on an opening protocol; making sure that you can serve at half capacity, seat every other table, etc.

**Q&A and Member Feedback**

I think that a big fear for us is that we may decide to bring in inventory and staff to prepare to re-open our restaurants, just to have the closure orders extended beyond April 30. We don’t want to find ourselves in a position where we can’t afford the preparations we have made to re-open.

Governor Polis: I think that we would likely know whether we need to change the timeline 7-10 days before April 30. This applies to notice for restaurants reopening, or if the closures need to be extended. Is this enough time?
Yes, that would likely be enough time.

**Are you looking at a gradual scale progression for re-opening? Limiting capacity?**

This is likely, although there isn’t a plan yet. Unless there is a vaccine or cure, it is very unlikely that we will open for full capacity and allow large crowds immediately. There is the possibility of a phase-in consideration that you suggested, or there could be geographic distinctions. Meaning, if for example, Denver has higher infection rates compared to Durango, Durango may open sooner.

**We could probably limit our capacity to 50%. But I am still booking a lot of large events, would there be protocols for that? They are starting in June.**

It’s hard to say what June will look like, but we will likely be on the same regulations and guidance as other surrounding states. We will hopefully know with 7 days’ notice.

**We have had some challenges with our lender, and we can’t apply for PPP. Do you know of cooperative institutions? Or can we submit multiple applications to multiple lenders to increase our approval chances?**

We want to make sure that we have state assistance, but these are largely federal programs. We are working on a state portal so you can find all relief in one place. Otherwise, you may need to reach out to SBA to get the answers to your questions. Sonia with CRA commented that they are looking into finding lenders that can help you, despite not having a previous relationship.

**From what I’m seeing for PPP, it goes from February to June, but it’s already April. Why those dates?**

Because it’s a federal program it may be better to have someone from the SBA or the federal delegation speak to those details.

**If we are allowed to open for operation, and there is another surge in the fall, how can we be better prepared next time?**

I think everyone will be better prepared next time around. We are scaling up testing and we would hope that any future surges could be narrowed down to a site-specific area. We hope and expect that if this surges again we will be better prepared.

**If our closure were to be extended, what sort of resources do you think would be available to us?**

The federal government is looking at a fourth relief bill. There is general recognition that there could be additional funding needed. I don’t think the country can endure this much longer, at some point things are going to have to change. We can’t let all of this be worse than the virus itself; we need our economy back, we need to re-open our businesses.

**The PPP is great, but with the federal increase to unemployment compensation, all my employees will be making more on unemployment, and I can’t in good conscience ask them to come back.**
SBA will be able to give you better answers. It shouldn’t be that workers are making more on unemployment. Sonia (CRA) reminded folks that, technically, if people are refusing to work, and have no valid reason not to, they may no longer be eligible for unemployment benefits. However, we understand that the unemployment office tends to err on the side of employees.

**Do you believe that with the tools available to the government, will you be issuing any additional requirements for businesses such as masks?**

We may be requiring additional hygiene practices. We think it would be helpful for you to suggest that your employees wear some form of facial cover and continue to be diligent with cleaning and disinfecting to reduce the spread of disease.