April 3, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Re: Reverse Harmful and Inconsistent Orders Against Residential Construction

Dear Governor Inslee:

I urge you to promptly reevaluate your policy designating residential construction as a non-essential activity under your “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” Proclamation (20-25).

With the recent extension of your order until May 4, the further delay of this critical industry in Washington will **continue to impede the livelihood of families who depend on these projects for housing security**. In the midst of one of the the largest and most sustained housing crises in the nation, Washington can no longer afford to delay the building of new shelter for its citizens.

The Department of Homeland Security “Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce” embraces this fact and designates “workers performing housing construction related activities” as essential. The vast majority of other states implementing similar orders to yours also acknowledge the critical nature of this work. Washington’s housing market, like the rest of the nation’s, is already struggling with attainable housing prices and any continued delay bringing desperately needed inventory to the market will only drive prices higher.

Your current policy permits the continuation of publicly-funded and other “essential” residential construction, clearly demonstrating that you believe **it can be done safely**. If the goal is truly to keep Washingtonians safe, all construction must be treated the same. Strict safety precautions have been established and utilized on sites currently allowed to continue work and, although physical distancing protocols slow work, **fairness mandates that we should continue efforts for both government funded and privately funded residential construction**.

While realtors, movers, and mortgage brokers have been designated as essential to avoid, in your words, “significant legal liability and displacement (if not homelessness),” your refusal to do the same for residential construction defeats your own ends. The lack of consistency and basic fairness in your orders results in confusion, ambiguity, and tension among neighbors, local governments, and the business community.

**I implore you to reverse this harmful policy and home construction as an essential activity along with the rest of the nation, the rest of construction, and the rest of housing industries.**

Sincerely,

(FULL NAME)

(CONTACT INFO)