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Dear Neighbor,

I hope you are doing well and are safe and healthy. It has been almost 4 months from the start of the stay at home orders for most of our communities. With a significant drop in customer traffic, we know all your focus as well as ours turned to protecting each other, our families, and our neighbors from COVID-19. Today, the week we begin to celebrate the 4th of July, we are on our way back.

As a country we have faced many challenges that seemed insurmountable – creating a free country while fighting the world’s greatest empire – the British, the Civil War – where we fought each other to create a fair and just society for all. World War I and World War II – where we fought to preserve our ideals not such for ourselves but for others against tyranny, and today – where we fight to ensure that our way of life is accessible to all who are citizens of our Country no matter their race, religion or gender.

We have been challenged before and we occasionally falter, but the great experiment of the melting pot of the United States has succeeded for 244 years now, despite changing times and challenges because of our differences, not in spite of them. In science, in medicine, in business, in technology and in social evolution we learn from our mistakes, we grow together, and in the end as American’s we celebrate.

The American Dream is embodied by our over 1,600 tenants, in over 85 communities whose goal is to support you and your neighborhood, while providing jobs, services, food, and experiences creating lasting memories and connections. Our job is to make sure they survive this pandemic like all your families.

The good news is that since starting the re-opening process, visitors to our merchants have come back to almost 2/3 the level we had seen prior to the safer at home orders. And every day, our traffic grows.

The key to all our success is ensuring we continue to operate safely. As I am sure you have seen in the news, we are seeing very sharp spikes in infection rates, which is leading to a pause in re-opening and in some cases a closing of businesses which had re-opened. This is a disaster for your merchants who are doing their best to survive with the limited capacity they can currently operate with.

We NEED you to support your community, merchants, retailers, and small businesspeople. The one way we know to help limit the spread of COVID-19 is to observe two simple rules – wear face coverings and observe social distancing. This should not be a political statement or controversial. The operator of a restaurant or a clothing store or a nail salon’s is following the guidelines of re-opening which means that these precautions are necessary. This is a war – this pandemic doesn’t care who it gets sick and it doesn’t mind using you as a host to infect others.

If the sacrifice in this war is wearing a face covering, then please join us in doing your part to help slow and stop the infections so our communities can remain open. We just need to get from here to a vaccine and keep as many people safe, and businesses operating until then.

On this Fourth of July, let’s think back to the many sacrifices made by those who fought for our independence, our freedom, our beliefs, and those who still sacrifice and march for a better world. Let’s all do our small part to support our friends, our neighbors and those who work to make our lives more fulfilled by doing those things we can be supportive and compassionate.

I wish you a very happy, healthy and meaningful Holiday weekend.

Sincerely,

President and Chief Executive Officer
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