



January 8, 2021

Commissioner C. Ray Davenport  
Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
600 East Main Street, Suite 207  
Richmond, VA 23219

Safety and Health Codes Board  
Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
600 East Main Street, Suite 207  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Commissioner Davenport and Members of the Safety and Health Codes Board,

As we enter the second calendar year of the coronavirus pandemic, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce's paramount priority remains our workforce and customers' health and safety. We also recognize that the prolonged economic dislocation caused by the pandemic has created more urgency for government to collaborate with and to support businesses to rebuild economic activity and to preserve jobs in Virginia.

We encourage the Board not to enact the Revised Proposed Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19. Notwithstanding the revisions to address some of the business community's concerns, we believe that proposed permanent standard does not minimize disruption and cost in meeting the regulation's health and safety goals. If the Board does enact the permanent standard, we encourage that it sunset once the pandemic state of emergency is lifted.

In proceeding, we continue to believe that businesses should have flexibility to apply practices that work best for achieving health and safety in their circumstances. The shifting regulatory landscape continues to be a challenge for our businesses' recovery, especially for our small businesses. We encourage the Board not to penalize businesses that have given a good faith effort in following these complex and evolving rules.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates  
President & CEO