



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Hunterdon Freeholders Call Upon Governor Murphy To Allow For Small Businesses To Offer Appointment-Based Shopping

Freeholder Director Shaun C. Van Doren and Deputy Director Susan J. Soloway have sent a joint letter to Governor Phil Murphy calling for “nonessential” retail businesses to be allowed to offer appointment-based sales effective immediately.

Numerous small businesses in Hunterdon County and across the State of New Jersey are facing severe economic hardship and many are at risk of never reopening again.

Freeholder Director Van Doren stated, “Allowing small businesses to offer appointment-based, retail shopping represents the next logical step forward in the reopening of New Jersey’s economy.”

Van Doren also added, “Various business relief programs such as the Paycheck Protection Program are running low on funds, and the United States Congress seems at odds over further economic relief packages.”

Deputy Director Soloway, a liaison to the County’s Economic Development Office stated, “The Hunterdon County Freeholder Board has heard from numerous small business owners that are rightfully concerned about their long-term economic future. As New Jersey’s ongoing lockdown continues, those businesses deemed as “nonessential” face an uncertain future. Appointment-based shopping offers a critical lifeline to many mom and pop businesses that are teetering on the edge of fiscal disaster.”

Soloway also noted, “There is no reason that an art gallery, specialty clothing store, pottery business, flower shop, or children’s toy store cannot offer a safe shopping experience in such a controlled environment.”

Hunterdon’s Freeholders previously encouraged Governor Murphy to permit curbside pickup for customers of small businesses, which the Governor subsequently allowed.

Van Doren and Soloway both noted that time is not on the side of many small businesses and downtowns across New Jersey. Both concurred that Governor Murphy must consider some reasonable measures to provide some financial relief sooner rather than later.

“Allowing an art gallery to sell a piece of art, or an artisan clothing or jewelry store to make a few sales could literally mean food on the table, or the ability to make a rent or mortgage payment,” noted Van Doren.