

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
20th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
ED ORCUTT

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives



FINANCE
RANKING MEMBER
TRANSPORTATION
RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL
RESOURCES

August 7, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Governor Inslee,

By now, I am sure you have seen the e-mails flowing in requesting that bowling centers be allowed to re-open. The purpose of this letter is to request you work with bowling centers to develop a way for them to re-open that provides protection against spreading COVID, but which also keeps them viable as the small businesses they are.

As one who bowled leagues regularly for several years, I know it will be a long time before they can go back to business as usual. But, I can also see ways in which they could operate to provide adequate distancing, so I believe it can be done – it just takes some effort by you and your staff to work with bowling proprietors to develop the details on how.

Bowling is a great sport that provides many benefits. It teaches people to problem solve. Lane conditions vary from week to week, from one lane to another, and throughout the course of a typical three game series. Bowlers are forced to determine how those lanes have changed and what adjustments are necessary to continue to score well.

Bowling centers add to our economy and to our state and local tax base. Most league bowlers purchase their own bowling balls, shoes, bags, and numerous accessories. It is common for bowling balls to go for \$125-200 each – and many bowlers own numerous bowling balls. And new balls made with new materials encourage bowlers to replace their old balls with new ones. To be successful on a variety of lane conditions, bowlers own different balls with different surfaces, hardness, and weightings (finger weight, positive or negative side weights, etc.). In addition to all the B & O tax collections we get from the economic activity at bowling centers, these equipment purchases are subject to sales tax.

It is an active sport. Imagine swinging a 16-pound ball 40-60 times in a two hour period and to do it with consistency – fingers, hands, arms, legs all get a workout. It provides a positive way to recreate and has become a popular high school and youth sport. I coached youth bowling for numerous years. And, I just honored a Lewis County high school as women's bowling state champions.

At one time, in the area where I bowled and coached, we had three bowling centers (Longview/Kelso) and hosted the state tournament. Over the years, we have lost two of the three bowling centers – please take action to help assure we do not lose our only remaining center in Longview – or anywhere else in our state.

Sincerely,

Ed Orcutt
State Representative
20th Legislative District