



Washington State Legislature

April 17, 2020

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

ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Governor Inslee:

We commend you for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and wholeheartedly support your efforts to protect all Washingtonians, especially those in our state who are most vulnerable to the virus. The magnitude of the decisions you are making are unprecedented. Each one with ramifications for every resident in our state, and we join you in making the safety and health of the people of Washington state the top priority.

We would like to bring your attention to the pet grooming industry. When the “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” orders initially came out, groomers were supportive of the action thinking that it would last 2-3 weeks. As time has passed, groomers and pet owners have grown increasingly concerned. There are many domestic breeds that are vulnerable to adverse effects if they continue to go without proper grooming.

According to the International Professional Groomers Association, services typically provided by professional pet groomers cannot always be performed by owners because of the technical skills required, physical capacity of the owner and behavior of the pet. Plus, many owners do not have the specialty equipment and supplies to groom their pet. After several weeks without grooming, many pets are apt to develop skin conditions, matting, and overgrown nails, and excess dander. These conditions are painful and unhealthy for pets. Present-day pets and service animals have been bred in such a way that regular coat, nail, and gland maintenance is required to avoid potentially costly and life-threatening conditions.

Groomers have proactively developed a thoughtful list of steps they will implement that will enable them to operate and care for the pets of Washington while at the same time promoting the health and safety of their employees and customers including:

Safe pick-up and drop-off outside of the salons to avoid close human to human contact
Conducting all billing and scheduling transactions online
Ensuring grooming stations are at least 6 feet apart
Wearing masks and gloves
Use of autoclave sanitizing stations and UV-C surface disinfectants
UV-C and HEPPA air filtration to remove airborne viruses, bacteria & allergens

Moreover; there is a human impact to be considered. Service animals are often unable to be cared for by their owners who themselves experience physical challenges that make impossible for them to care for themselves on their own. Service animals perform basic life-skills functions for their owners. Emotional support animals, support owners with a variety of mental health and emotional diagnosis. Pet grooming services are essential to the welfare of modern family pets and service animals alike.

Therefore, we the undersigned respectfully ask that you reclassify Pet Grooming facilities as an "Essential Service" And allow them to reopen immediately. This will enable a much needed and perhaps overlooked service to resume operations in our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Warmest regards,

Kelly Chambers

State Representative – LD 25

Washington House Republicans

Transportation | Healthcare & Wellness | Commerce & Gaming



Representative Matt Boehnke
8th Legislative District



Representative Mike Chapman
24th Legislative District



Representative Gina Mosbrucker
14th Legislative District



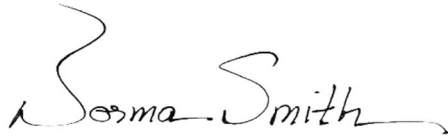
Representative Chris Gildon
25th Legislative District



Representative Amy Walen
48th Legislative District



Representative Carolyn Eslick
39th Legislative District



Representative Norma Smith
10th Legislative District



Representative Robert Sutherland
39th Legislative District



Representative Sherry Appleton
23rd Legislative District



Representative Joe Schmick
9th Legislative District



Representative Tom Dent
13th Legislative District



Representative Vicki Kraft
17th Legislative District

CC: Drew Shirk, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs, Angie Adam,