Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta opposes Governor Kemp's decision to reopen nonessential businesses

Atlanta, GA, April 21, 2020 — On April 20, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp announced that he is ordering certain businesses - specifically fitness centers, bowling alleys, body art studios, barbers, hair and nail salons, and massage therapy businesses - to open as early as Friday. His reckless decision to reopen businesses that are nonessential in a time of crisis will put many lives in danger, especially those of working class immigrants and people of color.

We at Advancing Justice-Atlanta ask that if you are able, to please continue to shelter in place.

Georgia has 19,881 cases with 799 deaths as of April 20th. With over 157 counties with confirmed COVID-19 cases, there is a lack of evidence and testing to determine that there has been a sufficient flattening of the curve for the state to safely reopen.

Georgia has disproportionately higher rates of diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease compared to the national average, and the state’s percentage of uninsured people are among the highest in the nation. The Governor’s hasty decision to reopen these non-essential businesses in Georgia will further stretch the capacity of the overburdened healthcare system and sharply undercut the effectiveness of the state’s current COVID-19 response measures.

“In a global pandemic, the state must prioritize saving lives,” said Stephanie Cho, Executive Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta. “By failing to provide a sufficient safety net or implement the necessary public health measures to control the spread of the virus, the Governor has failed to prioritize the safety of the people of Georgia. The people, especially the working class, will pay the price of his decision with their safety and lives.”

Advancing Justice-Atlanta strongly encourages our community members to stay at home as much as possible and take every precaution to help truly flatten the curve.

For community resources in English, Mandarin (traditional and simplified), Korean, and Vietnamese, visit: bit.ly/covid19resourcega.

About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees (“Asian Americans”) in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.