

May 19, 2020

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jeremy McDowell and want to start by thanking you for serving the people of Kansas.

I own Midwest Sports Productions, located in Shawnee, KS. Our business hosts youth sporting events, with a primary focus on baseball and softball/fastpitch. We operate 150 events in 8 states annually but the majority of these are in the KC metro/Kansas area. In 2019 we saw 1.4 million people come through our gates to attend our events.

I only tell you these numbers to hopefully bring some context about our organization and the people we get to serve in our community. As an organization we decided to keep everyone employed to help be a part of the solution for when it was time to get the kids back on the field to play. Even though we have lost over 50% of our annual revenue because of COVID-19 (a number that continues to grow by the day) we felt it was important to work to be leaders in our industry and pave the way to get these kids back to some sense of normalcy when it is safe to do so. We also knew it was our obligation to every person that steps foot into our events that we had worked to create a plan that would create a safe, family friendly environment.

We sent a survey to our customers and received 3,200 responses. We heard from them and know their exact hurt and pain, and also what they hope to see when we return to the fields. For each of our events, we partner with facilities all across the Midwest, to actually play our events at. From the beginning of this pandemic we have locked arms with each one (40+ in total) and have created plans for each. Each facility has its own unique features so creating proper entry/exit points, restroom cleanliness, spectator viewing areas, and much more was important to assess at the individual facility level. We needed to be proactive and work with our great partners to do this and we are happy to report that the mission has been accomplished!

I don't believe our industry is understood or being represented properly at the state level and I want to help. With Governor Kelly's introduction of phase 1.5, and the slowing of opening up youth sports, our industry is concerned, even fearful. My biggest concern is the well being of our kids. Talking with many coaches and parents this past week, getting back to the field was what was needed for the mental health of so many athletes. With the introduction of phase 1.5, teams that can have 10 on a practice field and have taken all precautions to keep their team and families safe, are no longer allowed to practice. This is disheartening. Being on a field with 10 or less people that you intimately know and have decided to do life with is much safer than stepping foot into any grocery store or restaurant with hundreds of people you don't know. I also strongly believe that we have put into place all the necessary precautions to prevent or minimize the spread of COVID-19 at our tournaments. Being allowed to play ball will allow for families to be together, doing something they love in an outside venue that typically is over 40-80 acres of ball fields.

Like so many, this has been a tough 2 month stretch. I have, and will continue to, respect the government. You are working hard to protect this great State. Unfortunately, decisions are being made that aren't fair across all industries and it appears the decisions are being made without input from those that know youth sports best. I am never one to bring the problem without also bring the solution. We have lead that way throughout this entire process for our

teams and ballparks and now we are asking for our voice to be heard at the state level. We are asking for you to use our talents and resources to solve how to open back up our industry.

I am available to speak more in depth and would enjoy the opportunity to talk with you about how badly kids need to return to play, how badly our businesses need to return to play, and how we can do this safely sooner rather than later.

Thanks for listening,

Jeremy McDowell
Steward/CEO
913-980-4111 (Cell)
PlayMSP.com