

# Metro East Legislators Urge Governor to Move Region to Next Phase of Recovery in Reopening Plan

May 12 2020 1:36 PM



**EDWARDSVILLE** – After looking at data reflecting the area’s recovery in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic, state Sens. Rachelle Crowe, D-Glen Carbon, and Christopher Belt, D-Centre ville, and state Reps. Monica Bristow, D-Alton, Katie Stuart, D-Edwardsville, Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea, LaToya Greenwood, D-East St. Louis, and Nathan Reitz, D-Steeleville, delivered a letter to Gov. J.B. Pritzker urging his administration to move the Metro East to the next phase as part of the Restore Illinois

plan, which would allow for a safe opening of manufacturers, retail stores, barbershops and salons. The legislators issued the following statement Tuesday:

“Our number one priority is, and will always remain, the health and wellbeing of Illinoisans. It’s clear that the damage done by the novel coronavirus is much more than just physical. It has taken a large toll on our communities’ financial health, as well on those families that grieve the loss of their loved ones. Because of the work from residents to help flatten the curve and reduce the spread, we have been able to maintain a steady and declining number of new cases of COVID-19 over the past two weeks.

“We believe that our region has met the criteria to move to phase 3 of recovery under the reopening plan that has been provided by the governor. Using proper safety precautions, businesses could safely reopen and put people back to work, helping to start the road to recovery for our region from this crisis. Many of our hardworking residents are struggling financially — from the small business owners to people like hairstylists and barbers. Under the next phase, many of those people would be able to go safely back to work while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

“We also propose that our region move to the next phase this Friday, May 15, as we currently meet the criteria to move forward, rather than waiting until the end of the month. These businesses represent the livelihoods of many, whether it’s a decades-old family-owned retailer or a new startup that took years of savings in order to open its doors. Each day that a business remains closed is another day without profit while expenses incur, making it only harder to financially recover. We also believe that moving forward, our state should implement a 14-day waiting period rather than a 28-day period to move to the next phase to help other businesses across the state.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and continue to be the ones that support our communities and organizations. This pandemic has put their futures in jeopardy, and when looking at the numbers, we are encouraged that progress is being made in fighting this virus. We all share the goal of getting people back to work in responsible manner that will safely protect Metro East workers, business owners, and residents.”