



STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

July 21, 2020

Mr. Eric Gertler
President
Empire State Development Corporation
633 Third Avenue – Floor 37
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Gertler,

On June 30, 2020, Erie County began its "Phase 4" reopening. As you are aware, this transition has come with many challenges and questions for businesses trying to survive financially during this pandemic. My office received a call from a local business, Pocketeer Billiards in Cheektowaga, NY. It is considered one of the most popular pool hall and pinball venue in Western New York. The small business owners reached out because they are required to remain closed, and wish to appeal that decision to both Empire State Development and the Erie County Executive.

Pocketeer Billiards is family owned and operated by Barry and Cindy Gluckstein. While they serve food and beverages, their main source of revenue comes from patrons buying such items while shooting pool and playing pinball. I've been there many times. It's a wonderful, family friendly business.

Like many other struggling establishments, they simply cannot make up for their losses with take-out orders. If they are not allowed to reopen soon, there is a good chance they'll have to close their doors for good. It is my understanding that there is no distinction in New York State between billiards and pinball venues like Pocketeer, and other indoor gaming venues, such as bowling. However, by the very nature of their games, pinball being a solo activity and billiards being already socially distant, it would be easy for them to accommodate New York State's requirements and reopen safely. I am hopeful you will consider reclassifying them with venues like casinos and OTBs, which are open.

I know you share my desire to help all businesses get back on their feet, and any help you can provide would be greatly appreciated. Please reach out to Mr. & Mrs. Gluckstein for further information by phone at (716) 822-7665, or by email at pocketeerbilliards@gmail.com. Thank you very much for your attention and quick resolution to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stefan", is written over a blue ink stamp of the signature.

Stefan I. Mychajliw, Jr.
ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

CC: Hon. Timothy M. Kennedy, New York State Senator
Hon. Monica P. Wallace, New York State Assembly
Ms. Amanda Mays, ESD Western NY Regional Director
Dr. Howard Zucker, New York State Health Commissioner
Hon. Tim Meyers, Erie County Legislator
Dr. Gale R. Burstein, Erie County Health Commissioner

Hon. Diane Benczkowski, Cheektowaga Town Supervisor
Hon. Brian Nowak, Cheektowaga Town Council Member
Hon. Jerry Kaminiski, Cheektowaga Town Council Member
Hon. Linda Hammer, Cheektowaga Town Council Member
Hon. Brian Pilarski, Cheektowaga Town Council Member
Hon. Richard Rusiniak, Cheektowaga Town Council Member