

To:

Date: 12/5/2021

**Re: Proposed Extension of Part 3 of the Health (Preservation and Protection and Other Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act) 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "Act")**

Dear

I am writing concerning the upcoming vote seeking to extend the duration of Part 3 of the Act, which is due to take place prior to 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

I wish to express my grave concern at the on going devastating impact of the severe restrictions relating to Covid-19, in particular with regards to the hospitality sector. I write to urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to vote against the continuation in force of Part 3 of the Act. This letter sets out what I regard as the main reasons for voting against its continuation and to safeguard our sector

1. Whilst I very much welcome the reopening of certain sectors within the Tourism & Hospitality industry, allowing some to reopen before others is going to cause detrimental and catastrophic consequences going forward for our industry
2. Allowing hotels to operate and facilitate indoor dining and drinking well before Restaurants and Bars will result in the Hotel sector gaining a very unfair advantage to recruitment of an already decimated workforce and result in a next to impossible scenario for Restaurants and Bars to recruit this summer. All we ask for is to be allowed open on the same date with the same guidelines
3. It is already very evident that most Restaurants and Bars have already lost a large percentage of their personnel to the hotel sector because of this
4. The traditional summer college employee is also seriously under threat. College students have a very limited time frame over the summer months to earn enough money to support themselves for rental and other expenses they incur at the start of their college year in September. Not allowing them to return to work in Bars and Restaurants come June 2<sup>nd</sup> will result in all this personnel power disappear and simply can not be allowed to happen
5. With no start date for Restaurant/Bars & Cafes etc to reopen, yet an immanent announcement for Irish people to be able to travel abroad, the domestic tourist season will be decimated. Irish people will not book domestic holidays if they don't know whether they can eat or drink indoors and will simply go abroad. We can not allow this to happen, especially when it can be easily prevented.
6. In the past sixteen months, Restaurants have been open for about four whilst most bars have not opened at all. All cash reserves are simply gone now for most small business owners. Having a non-runner of a season ahead this year will result in colossal closures. We can not allow this happen and be in a 'I told you so' situation come this winter. Especially when it can be easily avoided
7. We have been told to follow science all this time. Leo Varadkar has now openly stated in The Seanad, that there is absolutely no scientific evidence stating that it is more dangerous to eat in a Restaurant or Bar than it is in a Hotel. Therefore, we must simply open up the same date as Hotels & Guesthouses in the interest of fairness. Being given the reason that hotels have always fed their residents since

day one is an insult to our intelligence as what do you think restaurants did when they first originated?

8. We opened last year adhering to all government guidelines and traded safely. This season we will do the same with the added bonus of the majority of our vulnerable and elderly population vaccinated already and an accelerated vaccine rollout with around quarter of a million people receiving the jab per week.
9. Hospital numbers and ICU admissions are plummeting. We can not allow us to get to the end of June to say now its ok to open for all the reasons I have mentioned above. This will be too late, as I have already outlined. If we follow the science, this will happen anyway and we save our sectors going forward
10. The money that will be wasted in Revenue takings both in June, the summer season, but also this winter once so many businesses close, will cause a huge strain on an already exhausted social welfare system
11. So many of our foreign workforce has returned home months ago. In a lot of their countries, their average monthly salary is very little compared to ours. Some as low as four hundred euro PER MONTH. Because of our social welfare system, much of this workforce are now back in their own countries and still collecting the €350 PUP per week which they are fully entitled to. A lot are now also working back home. Most of this workforce simply will not be returning to Ireland and even when the PUP is reduced to the standard social welfare amount of €203 per week, it is very clear to see why this is happening. It will be the Irish tax payers that will fund this situation that they can claim welfare AND work back home also, as it will be impossible to know otherwise.
12. We have been told to follow public health advice. Yet public health advice is not always correct. Last year we were told that a €9 meal would be the difference between getting COVID or not. Without a single apology, admission of being wrong or even the slightest mention of compensation, NPHET & this Government have rightly abolished this hair brained scheme. Unfortunately they have now replaced it with a €100+ a night charge to stay in a hotel. Can I ask you for the scientific proof that COVID knows if you are staying the night so that it will leave you alone. If this is not available, please may I have the scientific proof that COVID can not climb stairs or suffers from Elevatophobia/Claustrophobia so it won't follow you to your bedroom and get you there?
13. NPHET will try to argue my logic and advise you that I am creating a scenario where COVID will thrive and risk the publics health. I would like to outline why exactly I disagree with this and suggest that it is in actual fact NPHET that is doing this for the following reasons
  - Most hotels are not equipped to cater for full occupancy for any meal. So a full hotel with all residents dining is a major risk for COVID spreading. Not all hotels can convert function rooms to cater for the overflow. Anyone that has ever stayed in a busy hotel knows what it is like trying to secure a table at 10am on a Sunday morning for breakfast. Now multiply that by ten for lunch and dinner everyday of the week
  - Last year we all witnessed Bars being packed both inside and out, yet a bar right beside them could not open due to the inability of serving

chicken nuggets. I am no scientist but diluting a crowd between multiple controlled premises clearly makes more sense

- Most Guesthouses & B&B's etc have no dining facilities at all for lunch or dinner. The Governments current reopening plan will result in major crowds/demands yet nowhere for them to eat or drink. This will result in two major issues. They will either cancel their planned holiday in Ireland or just eat/drink in an uncontrolled environment. The opening of all controlled Restaurant, Cafes & Bars indoors ends this problem
- A lot of Bars & Restaurants have now converted laneways with fully covered roofing and frontage and deeming this to be outdoor dining. Whilst I am delighted for them and wish them every success, we simply can not allow this to happen and keep everyone else closed. Indoor dining outside is not outdoor dining
- In recent days we have seen a respected Epidemiologist, Immunologist and Physician from Harvard Public Health/Medical school call out the Chair of NPHE, Philip Nolan saying it appears he doesn't know what he is talking about and should be ashamed of his demeanour. If such an individual like Micheal Mina is questioning NPHE, then every single politician should do likewise
- I am not for one single second suggesting all bars, restaurants and cafes etc, should open for a free for all and pack our premises but I am saying operating at a reduced capacity to something like 50-60% indoors for the month of June and all owners taking responsibility, with the public to do the same, we will show that contrary to this Governments belief, we can in fact be trusted. We will save an entire industry. We will prevent a major catastrophic economic disaster and we will, more importantly, save the livelihoods of tens of thousands of hardworking individuals and their families
- I am not even going to mention the weather with regards to this crazy and insane narrative of Outdoor dining that this current government and NPHE are trying to get us to buy into. If you have lived in Ireland for more than a week, you will understand why I don't need to

As outlined in all the above, I am urging you to vote against the proposed extension of this ACT. We the people are responsible for voting in our TD's. We vote you in to represent us to the best of your ability. Anything other than a 'vote No' will result in disaster for an already decimated sector. We can no longer be ignored and we will no longer be tolerated as non-essential citizens of our own Country. I very much appreciate your response and assurance that you have the peoples best interests at heart

Yours sincerely

Name:

Address: