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November 12, 2020

Ms. Raymie Parker
Chair
Stoneham Select Board
35 Central Street
Stoneham, MA 02180

Dear Chairwoman Parker:

This letter comes to you on behalf of the Stoneham Chamber of Commerce, through its Board of Directors, regarding the upcoming annual renewal of liquor licenses in the Select Board's capacity as the Liquor License Authority for the Town of Stoneham.

The Chamber strongly supports a one-time waiver of the fees associated with the the renewal of General On-Premises and Club liquor licenses for calendar year 2021. Restaurants and entertainment venues have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic with an estimated one in five establishments already closing in Massachusetts. Governor Baker's shelter-in-place order last spring shuttered restaurants for several months. Even now they can only operate in a limited capacity with shortened hours unable to fully utilize their liquor license as it is intended. As we are seeing COVID-19 cases steadily increase and the ability to offer outdoor dining options decline, we maintain that waiving these fees would relieve a financial burden to some extent for many small businesses in Stoneham.

The Chamber strongly believes that our restaurants are essential to Stoneham's local economy and to ensuring the continued vibrancy of our business districts. The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the continued success and longevity of these businesses and the many contributions, donations and community support these businesses provide to numerous nonprofit and civic organizations in Stoneham. To that end, the Chamber respectfully encourages the Select Board to vote in favor of a one-time renewal fee waiver.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Megan Day
Executive Director