

November 9, 2020

Dr. The Hon. Hubert Alexander Minnis, ON, M.P
Office of the Prime Minister
Sir Cecil Wallace Whitfield Centre
P O Box CB 10980
Nassau, N.P., The Bahamas

Dear Prime Minister Minnis,

RE: Current Restrictions on the island of Eleuthera

The Eleuthera Chamber of Commerce is concerned with the rising number of cases on our island and acknowledges that more must be done to curb our current trajectory. It was therefore expected and welcomed that as a result of our increasing numbers, some restrictions would have to be implemented.

We wish to note that our members have communicated to us and we have personally observed that most Eleutheran businesses have made every effort to comply with the emergency orders. This fact needs to be acknowledged as the majority of businesses have made significant investments to safeguard the public by hiring additional security as well as providing temperature checks and hand sanitizing stations inside their businesses. We have not taken this pandemic lightly.

We stand with the Government of The Bahamas in its effort to rid our island of this virus. That being said, we believe that we need to be surgical, deliberate and strategic in our approach if we are going to accomplish our goal of creating and maintaining a COVID free environment while also protecting our economy.

We would also like to point out that we are just entering our peak tourism season and early indicators show that there is an increase in interest in the island. With this in mind, we need to ensure that there is a balanced approach so that businesses who have been in desperate need of this economic lift do not lose out.

To this end, we would like the Competent Authority to revisit the airlift restrictions. Many persons have already booked their holidays and it is distressing for their plans to be interrupted at this stage. We have seen throughout this pandemic that guests have been very compliant with the rules and there is no need to deter those who want to visit from coming. Additionally, we are gravely concerned about the decision to close restaurants with bars. Instead, we would like the

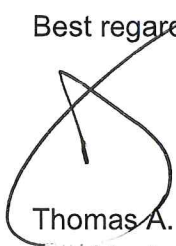
Competent Authority to consider prohibiting the serving of alcohol at restaurants while allowing them to offer both curbside and outdoor dining.

We are also of the view that weekends lockdown will be a major deterrent for those considering visiting the island. Our future recovery will certainly be negatively affected by these lockdowns and we believe we can wage war against COVID without going to this extreme as it will discourage visitor arrivals in the short and long term. Every visitor counts. We need this to be immediately revisited.

We would like to remind all those concerned that we are a major tourist destination. We are calling for a balanced approach that communicates to the world that Eleuthera is open for business but we deem all of the health protocols essential. As it stands, the business community feels that the shutting down of airlift, the closure of restaurants, and the weekend lockdowns will cripple a number of small businesses, which remain the backbone of our local economy.

Thank you for your kind consideration. We look forward to your favorable response.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas A. Sands Jr.', written over a circular scribble.

Thomas A. Sands Jr.
President