

Message from the President



Todd Maisch

President & CEO

*Illinois Chamber of
Commerce*

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Like many of you these days, my daily conversations with members, policy makers, and friends seem to always begin with the question "how are you doing?" My standard reply is that, on a relative basis, "just fine." Of course, that "relative basis" takes into account that we are in the midst of a public health and economic disruption few of us ever thought we would encounter.

It is inspiring to see the response from Illinoisans and, especially, the business community to our current crisis. Encouraging signs are beginning to emerge that the course of the pandemic may be turning in our favor. However, the economic crisis that has accompanied the public health crisis threatens to rage on for months if more forceful action is not taken. For this reason, I penned [today's op ed in Crain's Chicago Business](#) to lay out the Chamber's vision for re-balancing government response to the dual crises that we face.

The Chamber calls for a program we've deemed *Responsible Reopening and Rehiring*. It is very much in line with plans being rolled out by other state chambers and, in fact, may be even more aggressive. It addresses the central fact that thousands of businesses have been able to operate safely for the last several weeks. We call for an immediate reopening of all places of business that can meet the safety standards that have been successful in halting the surge in the pandemic.

More than 830,000 Illinoisans have lost their job in the last two months and nearly 30 million Americans have lost their jobs in the last six weeks. It is time to recognize that, yes, without the pandemic these job losses would not have occurred, but also that it is decisions by government that are the direct cause. It is time for us to demand that government review those decisions, improve them, and get our economy back on track.

Sincerely,

Todd Maisch
President and CEO
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**ILLINOIS CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

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