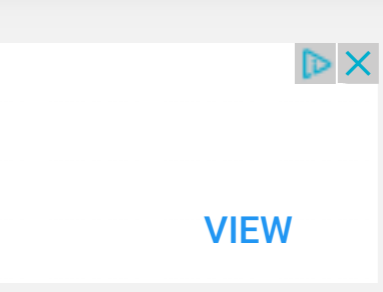




Bear Flag California Wines
Bear Flag Wines



LIVE Biden edge razor-thin; counts continue as protests escalate

Loosening restrictions on hospitality industry would be a mistake

Joyce Black-Sears et al. Nov 4, 2020 Updated 4 hrs ago



We write to express our strong opposition to the extension and/or weakening of regulations as relates to winery hospitality and visitation in Napa County as proposed by Coalition Napa Valley ("**Hurt by the pandemic and wildfires, some Napa Valley vintners request loosening of winery regulations,**" Oct. 23).

While the Board of Supervisors and the county of Napa were very kind to put in place temporary overrides of certain restrictions (for example, allowing outside tastings) through Oct. 31 due to the COVID pandemic, we as the wine industry must now honor the promise we made then and go back to where we were prior to the implementation of these temporary measures.

We offer the following salient points:

1. We have an Agricultural Preserve, which was adopted 50 years ago, whose integrity we have a moral obligation to protect. It has allowed Napa Valley to thrive, with the recognition that agriculture (not hospitality) is the highest and best use of our amazing land.
2. Our county is moving through the re-opening process, having recently been upgraded to Orange status. This is good news for all, and we all need to be vigilant and abide by the process so as to keep COVID in check.
3. Wineries staying open until 7 p.m. puts them in direct competition with our restaurant colleagues, who are already suffering greatly from the pandemic. They need and deserve our local support, and we want our visitors to patronize them.
4. The fires and smoke have been horrific all the way around, impacting all who live and work in Napa Valley, as well as impacting those who wish to visit our valley.
- a. These fires – their frequency and intensity – are the result of climate change (our drier, hotter, and windier climate) and our many decades of fire suppression in the American West. We must put our energies toward helping our neighbors and our natural environment, rather than on bringing more visitors to our valley.
5. Appointment-only is what many of us have always adhered to, and with the ease of communication (cell phones, etc.), it is far easier for potential visitors to reach those wineries they wish to visit. Consequently, this seems to be a non-issue from our vantage point.

It would be wonderful if the members of Coalition Napa Valley would join with others to focus on the health of all aspects of our economy, rather than on their personal gain.

After fires of this magnitude, we envision coming together as a community to collectively address the many issues that we face. Pushing for decreased regulation at a time like this seems wrong on so many levels.



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As an industry, we must honor the promise we made, gratefully accepting the concessions the county of Napa allowed in the wake of COVID and willingly going back to where we were.

Growers/Vintners for Responsible Agriculture

Joyce Black-Sears, Black-Sears Vineyard

Laurie & Tom Clark, Clark-Claudon

Randy Dunn, Dunn Vineyard

Mike Hackett

Julia Levitan, Dominus Estate

Beth Novak Milliken, Spottswoode

Cio Perez, Perez Vineyard Management

Jim Wilson

Warren Winiarski, Arcadia Vineyards

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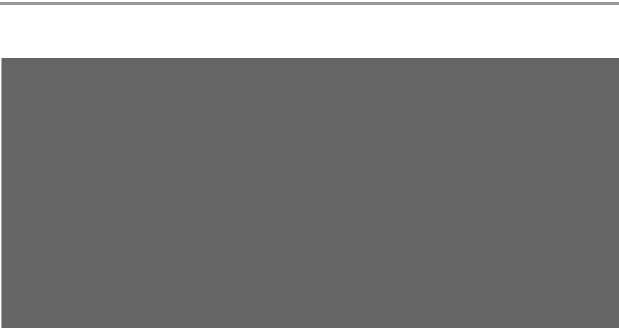


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Updated Nov 3, 2020

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Updated Nov 3, 2020

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