

News Release

Oakland County Board adopts policy to help economically and socially disadvantaged small businesses during coronavirus crisis

Resolution introduced by Commissioner Powell reserves \$5 million for businesses disproportionately impacted by COVID-19

July 1, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – The Oakland County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution introduced by Commissioner **Angela Powell** (D-Pontiac) that establishes the “Policy for Economically and Socially Disadvantaged Small Businesses Disproportionately Impacted by COVID-19.” The policy helps small businesses disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 by ensuring that at least \$5 million of economic recovery and small business grant awards established with CARES Act funding be reserved for qualified economically and socially disadvantaged small businesses.

“This policy protects businesses that are owned by and serve some of the most vulnerable people in the county so they have an opportunity to be successful during and after this crisis,” Powell said. “We continually learn more about what the pandemic means for Oakland County businesses and residents from all backgrounds, and I have been happy to work with my fellow commissioners and county administration to quickly adapt programs that are already in place.”

According to the latest statistics on Oakland County’s COVID-19 Dashboard, the communities of Pontiac, Southfield, Lathrup Village, Oak Park and the Charter Township of Royal Oak represent approximately 13 percent of Oakland County’s population but account for more than 31 percent of COVID-19 confirmed cases and 28 percent of Oakland County’s COVID-19 caused deaths.

“Certain areas of the county, and the small businesses in those areas, have felt an even greater negative impact due to COVID-19 because they are already statistically significantly economically disadvantaged compared to the median Oakland County household,” Powell said. “I’m proud that together with the EDCA, we’ll be able to ensure that they are not overlooked when we are awarding CARES Act funding through stabilization grants.”

Qualifications and criteria for participation in the program will be developed by the county's Department of Economic Development and Community Affairs. Criteria will include factors such as the business' history of economic and/or social disadvantage, its location or if they substantially serve a low-income community or community disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus and mitigation measures.

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