



February 24, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Office of the Governor
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the outdoor industry in California, we encourage you to allow climbing gyms across our state to re-open with appropriate safety protocols at this time. Revenues are down approximately 90% for these gyms and as the smaller gyms near bankruptcy, we fear what that means for the future of equitable access to outdoor recreation in California. The closure of Rock City Climbing Gym in Anaheim is just one example of key local health/wellness resources being put out of business permanently, and communities losing an important portal to responsible outdoor recreation.

During a time when California residents are encouraged to recreate safely and locally, many of California's youth and minority groups do not have access to climbing areas near home. Climbing Gyms are the portal through which young and diverse climbers begin their journey to the outdoors. Without access to climbing gyms, the barriers for many Californians to be able to climb will be excessive and it will create a situation where climbing is only accessible for those privileged enough to have the means for access.

We believe that climbing gyms, like our members Sender One and Touchstone Climbing, have demonstrated a standard of operating safely during COVID-19. These climbing facilities are large spaces, allowing members to safely distance while masked up in an environment with massive air circulation through high-ceiling HVAC systems. In May of 2020, you released a list of approved outdoor activities and rock climbing was included on that list. As most Californians do not have access to outdoor rock climbing near their homes, we need the support of rock climbing gyms to make that access possible. We encourage you to allow rock climbing gyms to re-open at this time.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Lyon", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Matt Lyon
California Outdoor Recreation Partnership