



November 3, 2020

The Honorable Kevin Stitt
Governor of Oklahoma
State Capitol Building
2300 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Governor Stitt:

Thank you for your continued leadership for our state and our economy. We appreciate all you have done to keep the economy open as much as possible.

Last spring, in March, you made a recommendation to the County Treasurer's Association of Oklahoma for an extension of the deadline for payment of ad valorem taxes and a waiver of the penalties and interest related to this extension. For your quick reference, we have included a copy of your March 24th letter to the Treasurers Association making this recommendation and request.

We are writing to ask for your consideration of a similar request for the taxes which will be due on December 31st this year. The hotel and lodging industry in Oklahoma, along with other small businesses, is being harmed in a unique way from the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to March 2020, hotel employment in Oklahoma totaled over 105,000 employees. To date, those employment numbers in the lodging industry have dropped by over 47,000 employees. With the cancellation of conventions and events, group gatherings, and the extreme drop in business travel, hotels are suffering in a way no one could have ever imagined. Through July, hotel room revenue at Oklahoma properties has declined by 34 percent and continues to decrease. With the December 31st deadline for the payment of 2020 ad valorem taxes fast approaching, many hotel properties, as well as many other small businesses, will be faced with the dilemma of paying employees or paying the tax or even closing their doors. Some of these closures will be permanent.

We are seeking your help to request a 6 to 8-month extension of the deadline for payment of the ad valorem tax and a waiver of the interest and penalties under the statutory authority cited in your attached letter from last March. This relief would help many hotel owners avoid making some very painful decisions and would allow them some needed financial help until we are able to defeat this virus.

We would welcome the opportunity to visit with you about this request if you need additional information or have any questions. Thank you for giving this request your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Hopper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" being more prominent than the last name "Hopper".

Jim Hopper
President and CEO
On Behalf of the OHLA Board of Directors

Arti Patel
Pristine Hospitality, OKC

Chase Rollins
Renaissance Waterford Hotel, OKC

Gabby Trad
Hilton Garden Inn, Edmond/Lawton

Blane Thompson
The Colcord Hotel, OKC

Christian Harris
Embassy Suites Medical, OKC

James Cunningham
Hyatt Regency, Tulsa

Bryan Davis
Courtyard by Marriott Bricktown,
OKC

David Davis
New Century Hotels, OKC

Jeff Erwin
Villa Teresa, OKC

Charles DiClemente
Doubletree Hotel Downtown, Tulsa

Dena Jones
Champion Hotels, OKC

Jim Wheeler
Love's Hospitality, OKC

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Joe Martin
Stillwater Hospitality, Stillwater

John Kelly
Hensley's Hospitality, Yukon

Julie Brady
Boarders Inn & Suites, Ardmore

Kyle Reans
River Spirit Casino & Resort, Tulsa

Maci Slater
Best Western Plus, Weatherford

Mark Dunn
Choctaw Casino & Resort, Durant

Michelle Hartman
Courtyard by Marriott Downtown,
Tulsa

Mike Farney
Champion Hotels, OKC

Mike Hembree
Smart Brands, OKC

Paul VanRaamsdonk
Grand Casino Hotel & Resort,
Shawnee

Pete Patel
Promise Hotels, Tulsa

Rex Amsler
Renaissance Hotel & Spa Downtown-
Bricktown, Tulsa

Robert Slater
Southern Hospitality, Inc., OKC

Ronnie Krodell
Aloft OKC Downtown/Bricktown,
OKC

Ross Martin
Hampton Inn & Suites,
Stillwater

Ryan Parker
Riverwind Hotel / Traditions Spirits,
Norman

Skip Harless
Skirvin Hilton Hotel, OKC

Steve Keenan
Omni Hotel, OKC

Travis Taylor
Hotel Indigo Downtown, Tulsa

Trisha Kerkstra
POSTOAK Lodge & Retreat, Tulsa

(attachment page three)



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 24, 2020

Penny Dowell
Grant County Treasurer
President, County Treasurers' Association of Oklahoma
112 E. Guthrie Room 105
Medford, OK 73759

Re: Waiver of penalties and interest in connection with
extension of ad valorem tax payment deadline

Dear Treasurer Dowell:

As you are keenly aware, our State and all of its citizens, individual and corporate, are facing unprecedented and historic challenges to public health and economic stability as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in our State and nation. In order to provide our citizens with as much assistance and relief as is reasonable and allowable, we have concluded it is in the best interests of all Oklahomans for all County Treasurers in Oklahoma to effectively extend the ad valorem tax payment deadline provided under 68 O.S. Sec. 2913 A. from March 31, 2020 to April 30, 2020, by waiving all penalties and interest which might otherwise accrue as a result of a failure to pay the ad valorem tax due under Sec. 2913 A. by March 31.

The statutory authority for a County Treasurer to waive the penalty and interest otherwise due during this effective 30-day extension, is set forth in 68 O.S. Sec. 2913 G., which provides:

"G, The county treasurer may waive penalties or interest in any case where it is shown to the county treasurer that such penalties or interest were incurred through no fault of the taxpayer. Each waiver of penalties or interest shall be audited by the Office of the State Auditor and Inspector each year during the annual audit of the county offices."

Therefore, it is the recommendation and request of the Governor and the State Auditor and Inspector that all County Treasurers in the State of Oklahoma effectively extend the ad valorem tax payment deadline under 68 O.S. Sec. 2913 A. by advising all citizens, individual and corporate, that penalties and interest **will** be waived on all ad valorem tax payments remitted to the County Treasurer by April 30, 2020.

Please disseminate this recommendation to all County Treasurers as soon as practicable, Thank you for your service and assistance in this critical time.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Kevin Stitt".

J. Kevin Stitt, Governor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cindy Byrd".

Cindy Byrd, State Auditor and Inspector