Dear Governor Inslee,

On behalf of the Washington Indoor Climbing Coalition, all 23 climbing gyms and over 180,000 climbers in the state of Washington, we stand with you in your response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand that you have had to make difficult decisions and thank you for your leadership. Public safety is crucial during this crisis.

The indoor climbing industry has been an advocate for safe and cautious operations during this crisis. When the pandemic first erupted most climbing gyms across the state had already been closed for the week prior to the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order. We take this pandemic seriously. During the reopening phases of our economy, climbing gyms have been operating under the fitness reopening guidelines, however climbing gyms are inherently different from fitness facilities. We request that climbing gyms operate under separate guidelines from fitness and be considered for reopening.

Climbing gyms are committed to operating in a manner that supports your efforts. Climbing is inherently a socially distant sport that operates in very large open tall and well ventilated warehouses doing an activity that is non-cardio where participants are physically distant and 100% masked. We support keeping the community local; we operate as membership based businesses requiring reservations so that capacity is low and we can facilitate contact tracing. Lastly, climbers use chalk; chalk is magnesium carbonate and is proven to reduce infectious SARS-CoV2 particles by 99%. We have studies and support from both researchers and health professionals stating that the environment climbing gyms operate in have characteristics that reduce the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

Like many businesses across our state, the indoor climbing industry is collapsing. We are a $30 million industry supporting 1000 employees with 180,000 Washington citizens as our customers. We have been operating at a loss for 8 months continuously and while closed we are operating at less than 15% of our normal revenue and staff. Many of our facilities are still employing key staff that will help them reopen (with little to no revenue). However, unlike many businesses that are currently closed, we feel we can be part of the medical and economic solution with industry specific guidelines and a limited reopening.

continued...
Again, we want to be part of the solution. We are confident that we can provide a plan that safely operates within our community, allowing employees to get paid, our businesses to survive, and the community to be active.

Please find enclosed our proposal for indoor climbing operations during the pandemic.

Thank you for your leadership during this time of crisis.

Respectfully yours,

The Washington Indoor Climbing Coalition

Tod Bloxham | Owner
Edgeworks Climbing
Stone Gardens
Seattle | Bellevue | Tacoma

Michele Lang | Owner
Insight Climbing
Bremerton | Bainbridge

Michael Lary | Owner
Guruhans Kroesen | Owner
Source Climbing Center
Vancouver

Laura Villarreal | Director of Operations
Bouldering Project
Seattle

Rich Johnston | Owner
Vertical World
Seattle | Lynnwood | Redmond

Stewart Hoover | Owner
ThanhVan Tran | Owner
Riverfront Rock Gym
Wenatchee

Brian Doyle | Owner
Climb Tacoma
Tacoma

Daniel Coltrane | Ops Manager
Summit Everett
Everett

Mike Boyer | Owner
Cirque Climbing
Lacey

Nathan Joyner | General Manager
High Steppe Climbing
Yakima

Andrew Hou | Owner
Uplift Climbing
Shoreline

Timon Behan | Owner
Wild Walls Climbing
Spokane

Adam Healy | Owner
Bloc Yard Bouldering
Spokane

Brandon Workman | Owner
Riverstone Climbing
Burlington

Pat Howard | Owner
The Rock Shop
Richland - Tri-Cities

David Sacher | Owner
Vital Climbing
Bellingham

Gloria Man | Owner
Daniel Man | Owner
Half Moon Bouldering
Seattle

Jeremy Park | General Manager
Momentum Climbing
Seattle
SAFE RETURN to CLIMBING
Executive Summary:
Indoor climbing facilities and activities are different from general fitness gyms due to the nature of the activity. These facilities are large, typically stand-alone buildings with tall walls, large footprints, and excellent ventilation. Climbing itself is a non-cardio sport that allows for continuous masking and physical distancing in these large, open spaces. The current fitness requirements that climbing facilities are operating under are inherently different in activity and infrastructure from fitness facilities. Due to the combination of 100% required masking, physical distancing, ample space, and excellent ventilation, the Washington Indoor Climbing Coalition requests to be classified as a low-risk COVID-19 activity that is regulated separate from the current fitness guidelines.

Washington State’s 23 climbing gyms (encompassing $30M in annual revenue, 1,000 employees and 180,000 WA citizens) are currently closed and have been operating at a monthly loss since March, currently at 15% of normal revenue and staffing.

Indoor Climbing Industry Differentiators:
● NOT FITNESS: Climbing gyms are a type of gym, however they are NOT fitness clubs. Climbing facilities are inherently different in activity and infrastructure from fitness facilities.
● MASKS REQUIRED: Climbing is not a cardio sport and can be done with a mask on at all times.
● SOCIALLY DISTANT: Climbing is inherently a socially-distanced sport with participants being 6'-60’ feet apart.
● LARGE OPEN FACILITIES: Climbing gyms operate in large, tall, open well ventilated facilities. Climbing gyms’ primary activity occurs at max heights between 16'-60’ feet off the ground.
● MAGNESIUM CARBONATE: Climbers use chalk on their hands, deactivating 99% of COVID contact.
● RISK MANAGEMENT: Climbing gyms are risk management businesses. We regularly and consistently enforce policies to mitigate risks to climbers and staff.
● LOCAL CUSTOMERS: Climbing gyms are local membership based.
● CONTACT TRACING: Climbing gyms utilize reservations, check-in/out procedures, and excellent contact-tracing.

Suggested Policy Options:
Adjust guidelines based on the ability to require masks, limit capacity through members only, and keep capacity at <25%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stand Alone Climbing Gym</th>
<th>Phase 1.5</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>25% Capacity</td>
<td>25% Capacity</td>
<td>50% Capacity</td>
<td>75% Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>Members Only</td>
<td>Members + Guests</td>
<td>Members + Guests</td>
<td>Members + Guests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Tracing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masks</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required &lt; 6’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruction Ratio</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockers/Showers</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Equipment</td>
<td>CLOSED</td>
<td>300 sq ft / person</td>
<td>200 sq ft / person</td>
<td>100 sq ft / person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruction Phase 2: For instructor led classes, 5 students per instructor, minimum of 600 square feet. Add’l students allowed for each additional 300 square, maximum of 10 students per one instructor.

Instruction Phase 3: For instructor led classes, 10 students per instructor, minimum of 800 square feet. Add’l students allowed for each additional 200 square, maximum of 20 students per one instructor.
Policy Recommendation:

- Change the guidance from Fitness Facilities to Indoor Recreation - Indoor Climbing Guidelines.
- Mandate the Indoor Climbing Industry continue to uphold universal masking at all times indoors.
- Require strict capacity, activity and participant limitations per the suggested policy options.

Sources:
University of Colorado: Liquid Chalk Proven in CU Labs to Kill Coronavirus - July 28, 2020

De Montfort University: Research shows climbing chalk is unlikely to transmit coronavirus - September 3, 2020

University of California, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology: Professor Kilpatrick Statement
https://drive.google.com/file/d/11gJjlia9l9kxQgLm7qPxn4IrEQsIA_Vy/view?usp=sharing

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UW Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Allergy & Infectious Diseases
Medical Director, Harborview Medical Center, Infection Prevention & Control

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Washington Indoor Climbing Coalition Members:
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Bouldering Project | Seattle
Cirque Climbing | Lacey
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Source Climbing Center | Vancouver
Stone Gardens | Seattle, Bellevue
Summit Everett | Everett
Uplift Climbing | Shoreline
Vertical World | Seattle, Redmond, Lynwood
Vital Climbing | Bellingham
Wild Walls | Spokane
HEALTH + SAFETY of INDOOR CLIMBING

Indoor climbing is different from fitness in that it operates in large open stand alone buildings with tall distant walls, is a non-cardio, socially-distanced sport, and can be done while wearing a mask.

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NOT FITNESS
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MASKS REQUIRED
Climbing is not a cardio sport and can be done with a mask on at all times.

SOCIALLY DISTANT
Climbing is inherently a socially-distanced sport with participants being 6’-60’ feet apart.

LARGE OPEN FACILITIES
Climbing gyms operate in large, tall, open facilities. Climbing gyms' primary activity occurs at max heights between 16’-60’ feet off the ground.

MAGNESIUM CARBONATE
Climbers use chalk on their hands, deactivating 99% of COVID contact.

RISK MANAGEMENT
Climbing gyms are risk management businesses, enforcing policies to mitigate risks to climbers.

LOCAL CUSTOMERS
Climbing gyms are local membership based.

CONTACT TRACING
Climbing gyms utilize reservations and check-in/out procedures, providing excellent contact-tracing.
SAFE RETURN TO CLIMBING

Climbers in Washington State already adhere to stricter COVID protection guidelines than other guests of indoor fitness and training facilities.

ALL CLIMBERS must adhere to a strict set of COVID protection guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASED APPROACH:</th>
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<tr>
<td>CUSTOMERS:</td>
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<td>Members + Guests</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LOCKERS/SHOWERS:</td>
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<td>Closed</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>FITNESS EQUIPMENT:</td>
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Protecting the HEALTH + SAFETY of our communities is our #1 PRIORITY.
WASHINGTON INDOOR CLIMBING COALITION
CONTACTS:

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