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April 30, 2020

The Honorable Tom Wolf  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
Room 225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor,

The *Los Angeles Times* this morning reported that Los Angeles County will soon be offering free testing for all its residents, regardless of whether they have symptoms or not. As you know, this is a critical step in getting citizens back to work and our economy back on its feet. Mayor Eric Garcetti announced that there are 34 test sites with the capacity to test 18,000 residents per day. It would appear that a key to reaching this critical milestone for LA County was to source testing kits directly from South Korea, which has become the world leader in developing and deploying these tests.

According to a March 23 article on Southern California Public Radio-affiliated website *LAist*, Los Angeles has an agreement with Seegene Technologies to provide an initial 20,000 test kits, with 100,000 additional kits per week. Republican Governor of Maryland Larry Hogan similarly dealt directly with South Korean leaders to secure 500,000 test kits for his citizens. Pennsylvania should be pursuing a similar strategy.

I understand the incredible challenge of securing testing materials and personal protective equipment in this unprecedented environment, and I respect your continued steady leadership through this crisis. However, I live in one of the most impacted areas of the state, specifically ZIP code 19143, and the progress in expanding the availability of testing in the neighborhoods I represent has been snail-like, or incremental at best. These low-income communities of color are especially hard-hit, as many residents are essential workers who are keeping our hospitals, grocery stores, and public transportation networks operating.

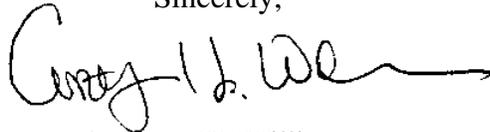
The future plans on how Pennsylvania will aggressively test and trace the spread of COVID-19 are unclear to many at this point. While the Senate Democratic Caucus has proposed using \$650 million of the federal CARES Act funding to improve our healthcare system,

including providing for universal testing and detailed contact tracing through the hiring of over 10,000 health care workers dedicated to tracing, the legislative process remains difficult to navigate and slow to respond.

Governor Wolf, I'm respectfully requesting that you do everything in your power under the disaster declaration to aggressively pursue test kits, whether domestically or from abroad, and push those kits out to the areas in which they are most needed, particularly low-income communities of color. Within my district, there are trained medical practitioners who can administer these tests, they just need access to swabs, test kits, and PPE to safely administer the test. To avoid another round of infection and death we need to provide robust testing and other resources in every community in Pennsylvania regardless of wealth.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for keeping the health and safety of Pennsylvanians as your top priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony H. Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anthony H. Williams  
State Senator – 8th District