



Office of the Speaker
North Carolina House of Representatives

TIM MOORE
SPEAKER

Secretary Mandy Cohen
N.C. Department of Health and Human Services
2001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Dear Secretary Cohen,

Thank you for your continued efforts and updates regarding COVID-19 and its effect on the citizens of North Carolina. We agree that decisions related to social distancing and other protections established for our state must be fact-based and driven by accurate, reliable, and complete data.

From data provided to date, each of our counties has had a unique experience as it relates to the pandemic, with some more affected than others. I appreciate that the Governor recently stated his willingness to consider a regional approach to reopening North Carolina's economy.

The map of cases by ZIP code published by your department has been an overdue, welcome addition to the information available to the public and policy makers. It reveals that COVID is not hitting this state evenly—our dense urban cores are generally being hit much harder than rural areas of this state.

This data informed our bipartisan response, which fully funded your department's request of \$25 million for testing, tracing, and trends analysis that will support a safe reopening of our state economy.

More robust and in-depth data on daily testing by county – including all key metrics as well as confirmed cases – is also needed to provide more actionable information on the spread of the virus. I request that your administration begin to provide more detailed daily testing data by county as soon as possible.

Further, Session Law 2020-4 from the Covid-19 Recovery Act requires additional information to be released by your department regarding comorbidities and underlying health conditions related to each COVID death and hospitalization. Please advise my office when this critical information will be provided.

Our rural residents deserve equal access to testing—and if the facts permit, a speedier return to normalcy. I request that less populated counties not be grouped into regions with major metropolitan communities as we transition to a local approach.

For example, my home region around Cleveland County should not be grouped with Mecklenburg County and Charlotte, N.C. There is no justification for requiring rural areas like Avery and Currituck counties to experience the same crippling economic restrictions as Wake County, if they receive adequate testing their residents deserve without significant positive cases.

More detailed information on COVID deaths, along with antibody sampling the legislature has pursued, will provide us all with a more accurate understanding of COVID-19 trends vital to our decision-making.

Your prompt cooperation and assistance with this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

CC: Governor Roy Cooper
CC: Lt. Governor Dan Forest
CC: Senator Phil Berger