

KATHY CASTOR  
14TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

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June 1, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Governor  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

RE: Release State Testing Plan to Protect Floridians and Ensure Transparency

Dear Governor DeSantis:

The key to safely reopening Florida's economy and to keeping our neighbors healthy is widespread and rapid testing with diligent focus on vulnerable Floridians. The State of Florida was required to submit a testing plan to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) last week, but it is unclear that the state has followed the recent law passed by Congress to do so.

Health experts advise that widespread COVID-19 testing is essential before any broad reopening for the State of Florida. Florida received over \$420 million to support COVID-19 testing in the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act (H.R. 266), which included \$11 billion for States to implement widespread testing. The requirement that the State submit a testing plan to HHS is a necessary condition to the federal monies. Has the State of Florida developed a broad-based testing plan and submitted it to HHS?

As you know, the State of Florida's testing plan was due to HHS 30 days after enactment of H.R. 266. The bill was signed into law on April 24, 2020, so we are past that deadline. According to the law, the report shall include the State's testing goals for the remainder of 2020, the number of tests needed, month-by-month estimates of laboratory and testing capacity - including workforce, equipment, supplies and available tests - and a description of how the State will use its resources for testing. This is important information that our neighbors, local officials and public health experts need to make informed decisions and save lives.

Your efforts to proceed with reopening must be based on good science and public health recommendations and be transparent for Floridians and policymakers to understand. It is important to build confidence that the State has a thoughtful testing plan and ensure the public understands the way forward.

Again, I strongly encourage you to release the State of Florida's testing plan as soon as possible to protect the wellbeing of Floridians during this crisis. I stand ready to work with you to keep Floridians healthy consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and your stated fundamentals.

Sincerely,

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

Kathy Castor  
U.S. Representative  
Florida – District 14