



## KEEPING YOU SAFE & INFORMED

### DIRECTOR'S UPDATE TO EMPLOYEES - 3-24-2020

*This is being sent to distribution list DOT-AG-ALL STAFF-GL. Please post for those without access to email.*

We are saddened tonight to learn of the first death in Iowa from COVID-19. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family during this difficult time. Even though only two weeks have passed since we began the fight against COVID-19, in many ways, it has felt like two years. From past experience, I can tell you we are in that time of the fight when we must slog it out and put one foot in front of the other no matter how difficult that may be. The word is perseverance.

To get a sense of where we are in the fight against COVID-19, let's take a look at the data. As of this evening, there are 124 positive cases in Iowa, 18 hospitalized, and 1 death. There have been a total of 2,315 negative tests to date, which means 95% of all COVID-19 tests have been negative. In fact, there have been 9 former COVID-19 patients released from the hospital, fantastic news. To date, 69 (of 99) counties have no infection detected.

The Governor's team mentioned today that the strategies used to fight COVID-19 are like a dial, not a switch. As more mitigations become necessary, the dial is turned up or down as needed. The Governor also stressed not getting distracted by rumors or "noise" out there, and focus on the data. It still comes down to the same basic guidance we have already heard: If you are sick, stay home. Wash your hands frequently. Cover your cough/sneeze. Practice social distancing. Limit your interactions with others.

Our traffic data is beginning to show the results of these methods. Last Sunday, our traffic recorders logged a decrease in passenger vehicle traffic of just over 47%. Meanwhile, the traffic data showed no decline in truck traffic. This means people are listening to the message to limit social interactions, while trucks continue to provide needed commodities to our stores.

The US Department of Homeland Security has defined the transportation sector as "essential service" in emergency events. We remain open for business and ready to provide our essential services in amazingly creative ways. We have encouraged our construction partners to push forward, our transit and aviation partners to not give up, commercial drivers to stay on the road, and our Commissioners to meet virtually. We have more staff than ever before teleworking, while taking dramatic steps to protect those who cannot telework. Not only are we open for business, but we are actively re-defining our new normal every day while getting it done.

Do not give in to fear or rumors. Do not engage in speculation about what may or may not happen. Rather, persevere... keep putting one foot in front of the other. The data show that our methods are getting some results, thanks in no small part to the fine men and women of the Iowa DOT. We persevere because this is who we are, because we believe in our families, and because we know that on the back side of this is freedom. And that sounds pretty good to me.

Scott