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CHINCOTEAGUE, VA 23336

ELECTION DISTRICT 2
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VICE CHAIR
ATLANTIC, VA 23303

ELECTION DISTRICT 3
VANESSA KAY JOHNSON
SANFORD, VA 23426

ELECTION DISTRICT 4
PAUL E. J. MUHLY
PARKSLEY, VA 23421

ELECTION DISTRICT 5
HARRISON W. PHILLIPS, III
MODEST TOWN, VA 23412

COUNTY OF ACCOMACK

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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ELECTION DISTRICT 6
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ONANCOCK, VA 23417

ELECTION DISTRICT 7
H. "JACKIE" PHILLIPS
ONLEY, VA 23418

ELECTION DISTRICT 8
DONALD L. HART, JR.
KELLER, VA 23401

ELECTION DISTRICT 9
C. RENETA MAJOR
CHAIR
PAINTER, VA 23306

May 14, 2020

Governor Ralph S. Northam
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Thank you for guiding the Commonwealth through this turbulent time. Your leadership throughout this pandemic and your openness to consider the voice of Virginia localities is greatly appreciated.

I write this letter at the request of the Accomack County Board of Supervisors who is extremely concerned about the high number of positive COVID-19 cases in Accomack County and the significant number and size of the outbreaks that have occurred within its borders. The number of cases in the County continues to grow at an alarming rate and, with recent testing in both community and congregate facility settings, local health officials have warned total positive cases could increase by over fifty percent in a matter of days. We know that you share our concerns as a native of this County and the Governor of Virginia. Our per capita positive cases are already extremely high when compared to other Virginia localities. Despite having a population that is only .39% of the state population, our number of positive cases represents 2.14% of the statewide totals. In fact, they currently align better with localities in Northern Virginia, an area that you have allowed to remain in Phase Zero until May 29, 2020. We also wish to help our businesses recover and prosper, but not at the expense of public health.

While we are supportive of your science-based approach to reopening the Commonwealth, we truly believe that the decision to reopen Accomack County is best made by relying on data from this region as opposed to statewide trends. The Board believes the path to the most successful outcome is dependent on these areas ability to achieve the metrics you have so clearly laid out in your Forward Virginia blueprint for easing public health restrictions. Currently, data is not readily available to determine whether Accomack County meets these metrics so the Accomack County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests you to extend the Phase Zero restrictions currently in place here until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, May 28. A two-week delay will allow sufficient time for data to be accumulated for this area and analyzed to determine if it is indeed ready to take further steps to reopen. It will also align with the time extension granted to Northern Virginia, a region also experiencing more than its proportional share of cases.

Accomack County clearly understands that you would prefer requests to delay Phase One implementation of the Virginia Forward plan to be regional. Unfortunately, this is not a regional request, it is a request of the Accomack County Board of Supervisors. Due to timing issues, we were unable to coordinate with the incorporated Towns and this request is not being made on the Town's behalf. Additionally, both the Town of Chincoteague and Northampton County have taken affirmative action to support the implementation of Phase One.

The Board believes (and the data supports) that Accomack County is in a precarious position relative to our Covid-19 metrics. We request that you consider our circumstances, and consider a deviation from your requirement for regional requests and consider the County's request on its merits.

Thank you again for your leadership and consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael T. Mason". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" being the most prominent part.

Michael T. Mason, CPA
County Administrator

cc: Clark Mercer, Chief of Staff: clark.mercer@governor.virginia.gov
Rita Davis, Governor's Counsel: rita.davis@governor.virginia.gov