

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4606

July 21, 2020

Dear Governor Reynolds,

I write to express my concern regarding your decision to decrease the availability of testing at the Test Iowa Clinic in Dubuque, limiting tests to 100 per day as well as cutting the clinic's hours down to only one hour, four days a week. This month, Dubuque County has seen its most staggering case counts of the entire pandemic, and one of the highest days was just last Thursday. Now is not the time to be ramping testing down anywhere in our state – in fact, testing is needed now more than ever to identify and contain the spread of the virus.

There is simply no room for error as we work to keep our constituents safe from COVID-19. I am concerned that decreasing testing in places like Dubuque County could prevent progress toward controlling the virus and getting our economy back on track. Iowans expect data-driven decisions from their leaders, and that means keeping enough testing where COVID-19 cases are high and where there is demand for testing.

While the situation worsens in certain parts of Iowa, it is frustrating to see our neighboring states able to offer testing to their residents without delay. The State of Illinois is operating community test centers throughout the state that are open to all, regardless of their symptoms. In Adams County, Illinois for example, those tested can expect results in 24 to 48 hours while Iowans are often waiting longer to know the outcome of their test which they only qualify for after screening and an appointment.

The Test Iowa initiative was made possible with federal funding from the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136). As a Member of Congress, I have a responsibility to ensure taxpayer money is being spent wisely and to fight for additional resources for Iowa if they are needed. With that in mind, I request the following information:

1. Please detail any issues or factors that led or contributed to your decision to limit Test Iowa operations in Dubuque, including any communications or issues with the private companies that the State has contracted with to operate Test Iowa.
2. What impact will decreasing Test Iowa operations have on the total number of tests completed in Dubuque County each day? While Test Iowa capacity remains limited in Dubuque, are you pursuing other options to bring testing to the area?
3. Is additional funding needed maintain Test Iowa operations in Dubuque? Of the federal funding awarded for testing, how much has been spent on Test Iowa thus far and how funding much remains available to the state?

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4. Have testing backlogs or other operational problems further impacted testing capacity or wait times in Iowa?
5. Why will the Dubuque Visiting Nurses Association no longer be able to assist residents with assessments over the phone? As long as Iowans are required to complete an online assessment prior to being tested, what is your plan to help those with limited connectivity and no family or friends in the position to assist them?

I stand ready to work with you to ensure Test Iowa has strong operations across our state. Thank you for your ongoing work on behalf of Iowans and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Abby Finkenaue
Member of Congress