

A PROCLAMATION FROM HIS EXCELLENCY

THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I issued a declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies, proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the State of Connecticut as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommend implementation of community mitigation strategies to slow transmission of COVID-19, including cancellation of gatherings of ten people or more and social distancing in smaller gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 is higher for individuals who are 60 or older and for those who have chronic health conditions; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have determined that it is possible to transmit COVID-19 even before a person shows symptoms and through aerosol transmission; and

WHEREAS, a statewide primary election is scheduled for August 11, 2020, to select candidates for various state offices and for the 2020 federal presidential election; and

WHEREAS, a statewide general election is scheduled for November 3, 2020, to select candidates for various state and Congressional offices and for the office of the President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of poll workers and volunteers are 60 or older; and

WHEREAS, because elderly registered voters consistently demonstrate the highest rate of voter turnout, providing an alternative to in-person voting could be particularly helpful in reducing the risk of transmission during voting among this population; and

WHEREAS, there is no approved vaccine to prevent or mitigate the effects of COVID-19, and there is not expected to be such a vaccine approved or widely available by November 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have indicated that persons infected with COVID-19 may not show symptoms, and transmission or "shedding" of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 may be most virulent before a person shows any symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has recommended that people with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 be assumed to be infected with the disease; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have recommended that, to prevent transmission of COVID-19, and in light of the risk of asymptomatic transmission and a significant rate of false negative tests, everyone should assume they can be carrying COVID-19 even when have received a negative test result or do not have symptoms; and

WHEREAS, absentee voting offers a proven method of secure voting that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 by allowing individuals to vote by mail and by reducing the density of in-person voting at polling places; and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2020, pursuant to my emergency powers under section 29-8(b) of the General Statutes, I issued Executive Order No. 7QQ, which modified state statutes to permit absentee voting for the August 11, 2020 primary by electors who are unable to appear at the polls because of the sickness of COVID-19 while there exists no federally approved and widely available vaccine; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and other state laws guarantee every person the equal protection of the law and the freedom to exercise and enjoy civil and political rights without discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut has long struggled to make that guarantee a reality, especially with respect to people of color, extending as far back as its colonial origins, through its years of legalized slavery after statehood, and continuing to the present time, during which a disproportionate number of law enforcement activities, including uses of force, are Black people and other people of color; and

WHEREAS, a Minneapolis police officer's killing of George Floyd has revealed once again the injustice and cruelty that Black people and other people of color suffer at the hands of law enforcement, and has thereby awoken the public's demand for reforms to our law enforcement agencies and progress toward a just and equitable society; and

WHEREAS, these recent events and the justifiable public anger over them once more confront us with what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called 'the fierce urgency of now'; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly passed, and in more recent instances I have signed, legislation promoting police accountability and transparency as well as broader reforms to our criminal justice system, such as Public Act 11-71, Public Act 12-74, Public Acts 15-2 and 15-4 of the June Special Session, Public Act 19-59, and Public Act 19-90, but much more work remains to be done; and

WHEREAS, immediately adopting evidence-based strategies for producing quick and visible progress will promote public safety; and

WHEREAS, implementing and codifying more restrictive use of force policies, in combination with other measures, can reduce police use of deadly force and the likelihood that police officers will be injured or killed in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare providers providing services to patients need flexibility in testing, diagnosis and treatment while supporting adequate social distancing measures, and the increased utilization of the delivery of health care or other health services through certain modes of telehealth service helps provide the needed flexibility; and

WHEREAS, insulin and other drugs, equipment and supplies are essential for many thousands of Connecticut residents who suffer from diabetes; and

WHEREAS, insulin and other drugs, equipment and supplies, though widely available and relatively inexpensive to manufacture, have become increasingly and unjustifiably expensive and therefore unavailable to many diabetes patients who rely upon them to avoid severe illness or death;

NOW THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by the authority vested in me under Article III of the Amendments to the Constitution of Connecticut and Section 2-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, in order to preserve orderly and decent government, do hereby:

Convene the General Assembly in Special Session in Hartford no earlier than Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. to:

- (1) enact legislation to (a) temporarily expand absentee balloting for the August 2020 primary and November 2020 general election in response to the COVID-19 pandemic so that voters may lawfully cast absentee ballots because of the sickness of COVID-19; (b) temporarily alter statutes governing the administration of elections to ensure local officials may administer such absentee balloting in a secure and orderly manner; and (c) permit voters to register and vote on election day at more than one place per town and to do so as long as they are in line to register to vote before 8:00 p.m.; and
- (2) enact legislation to promote greater transparency and accountability for law enforcement;
- (3) enact legislation to (a) temporarily relax restrictions on who can provide certain telehealth services and the modes through which such services are delivered; (b) assist health care practitioners in issuing and pharmacies in transferring prescriptions; (c) temporarily make such services more available to certain publicly and privately insured patients; and
- (4) enact legislation to promote more affordable access to prescription drugs, equipment, and supplies used to treat diabetes by (a) limiting the coinsurance, copayments, deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses certain insurance policies may impose on insureds for such drugs, equipment, and supplies; (b) authorizing licensed pharmacists to prescribe and dispense emergency quantities of such drugs, equipment, and supplies; (c) establishing a

working group to design certain parameters of a program referring eligible individuals who have been diagnosed with diabetes to a federally-qualified health center, and authorizing the commissioner of social services to apply for a Medicaid waiver, pursuant to Section 1115 of the Social Security Act; and (d) more closely conforming various provisions of the general statutes concerning high deductible health plans to provisions of the Internal Revenue Code concerning health savings accounts and medical savings accounts.

Given under my hand and Seal of the State at the City of Hartford, this 17th Day of July in the year two thousand and twenty.

Ned Lamont



Governor

