

GREG STANTON
ARIZONA'S 9TH DISTRICT

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence
Vice President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Pence:

Top public health officials in Maricopa County, Arizona – which I represent – have informed me that coronavirus rapid diagnostic test kits sent to the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory on February 11 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are defective. As a result, Arizona officials have not had the tools necessary to quickly confirm COVID-19 cases and must continue to send their patient samples across the country to Atlanta, Georgia in order to be tested by the CDC. Officials in my state have been forced to wait upwards of nearly two weeks to receive coronavirus test results.

This is outrageous and unacceptable.

In my district, there has already been one confirmed case of the novel coronavirus, and local public health officials are working to stop it from spreading. But the flat-footed response and lack of transparency from this Administration continues to make their jobs more difficult. Defective test kits, for example, waste taxpayer dollars – not to mention precious time as pandemic health experts continue to learn more about how this virus spreads.

It is essential that the Administration provide a complete and thorough explanation regarding what steps it is taking to make sure this does not happen again. My constituents, and indeed all Americans, deserve to have a competent and transparent response to the coronavirus epidemic – and that includes ensuring their local health officials have the resources they need to keep them informed.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Stanton".

Greg Stanton
Member of Congress