STATE OF MARYLAND

Proclamation

Renewal of Declaration of State of Emergency and
Existence of Catastrophic Health Emergency — COVID-19

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2020, a state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency was, pursuant to the Maryland Constitution and Laws of Maryland, including but not limited to Title 14 of the Public Safety Article, and in an effort to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19, proclaimed within the entire State of Maryland;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly infectious respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person, physically contaminates property by attaching to surfaces for prolonged periods of time, and may result in serious illness or death;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a public health catastrophe and has been confirmed in all Maryland counties;

WHEREAS, rates of COVID-19 infection continue to rise in more than 30 states and the risk of further spread back to Maryland remains high;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 infection outbreaks continue to occur in Maryland through community transmission and because of travelers returning from out-of-state;

WHEREAS, since the declaration of a state of emergency and existence of a catastrophic health emergency on March 5, 2020, there have been nearly 96,000 laboratory-confirmed positive COVID-19 cases and more than 3,000 related deaths in Maryland, with increases in new confirmed cases daily;

WHEREAS, the proclamation declaring the emergencies was renewed on March 17, 2020, April 10, 2020, May 6, 2020, June 3, 2020, July 1, 2020, and July 30, 2020;

WHEREAS, the spread of COVID-19 in the state continues to pose an immediate threat to all Marylanders of extensive loss of life or serious disability;

WHEREAS, the emergency conditions, state of emergency, and catastrophic health emergency continue to exist;

WHEREAS, all levels of government in Maryland must deploy resources to protect public health and safety;

WHEREAS, continued emergency response by the State is needed to maintain and further progress through the Maryland Strong: Roadmap for Recovery, including expanding COVID-19 testing capacity, maintaining adequate patient surge capacity, supplying sufficient personal protective equipment, and executing a robust contact-tracing operation;

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Maryland Department of Health recommend the use of face coverings in public settings to the extent possible, continued social distancing, and avoiding large gatherings;

WHEREAS, although the State's elections would ordinarily be conducted mainly at polling locations, the State Board of Elections reports that the state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency have impacted the availability of election judges and facilities;

WHEREAS, elections must be accessible, secure, safe, and fair; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Elections maintains that COVID-19, the state of emergency and the catastrophic health emergency, and the State's emergency actions in response have interfered with the electoral process and impaired the Board's ability to conduct the general election of November 3, 2020, in accordance with the existing statutory and legal voting systems, locations, and procedures;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF MARYLAND, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO TITLE 14 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE AND TITLE 8 OF THE ELECTION LAW ARTICLE, AND IN AN EFFORT TO CONTROL AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 WITHIN THE STATE, HEREBY DECLARE THAT A STATE OF EMERGENCY AND CATASTROPHIC HEALTH EMERGENCY CONTINUES TO EXIST WITHIN THE ENTIRE STATE OF MARYLAND, RENEW THE MARCH 5, 2020, PROCLAMATION, AND FURTHER PROVIDE AND ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. General Election of November 3, 2020

a. The State Board of Elections (the "State Board") may establish, as alternate voting locations or systems, voting centers for the use of any eligible voter who chooses to cast a ballot in person in the general election of November 3, 2020 (the "General Election").

b. Any eligible voter may vote at a voting center in the voter's county of residence.

c. In preparation for and execution of the General Election, the applicable COVID-19 guidance published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Maryland Department of Health, and any other applicable orders, shall be complied with to the maximum extent practicable.

d. The State Board shall provide maximum notice as possible to voters about use of voting centers in the General Election, as well as other appropriate education regarding alternate voting locations, systems, and procedures established.

e. The effect of any statute, rule, or regulation of an agency of the State or a political subdivision inconsistent with the State Board's establishment of voting centers for use in the General Election, or otherwise inconsistent with this Order, is hereby suspended.

B. Health care providers who act in good faith under this catastrophic health emergency proclamation, including orders issued under the proclamation by the Governor and by other State officials acting at the direction of or under delegated authority from the Governor, have the immunity provided by § 14-3A-06 of the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Code.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland in the City of Annapolis, this 10th day of August, 2020

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor

ATTEST:

John C. Wobensmith
Secretary of State