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Six-State Testing Agreement Is First Of Its Kind Among Governors During COVID-19 Pandemic Expansion of Rapid Antigen Testing Is Critical As States Face Testing Shortages and Delays More States, Cities, and Local Governments May Join Compact In Coming Weeks

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, **Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards**, **Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker**, **Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer**, **Ohio Governor Mike DeWine**, and **Virginia Governor Ralph Northam** announced a major bipartisan interstate compact with the **Rockefeller Foundation** to expand the use of rapid point-of-care antigen tests to slow the spread of COVID-19 and continue safely reopening the states.

As the nation continues to face severe testing shortages and delays, this is the first interstate testing compact of its kind among governors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Hogan, in his final days as chair of the National Governors Association, negotiated the compact with the Rockefeller Foundation. The initial agreement includes six governors—three Republicans and three Democrats—and additional states, cities, and local governments may join the compact in the coming days and weeks.

By banding together, the states are demonstrating to private manufacturers that there is significant demand to scale up the production of these tests, which deliver results in 15-20 minutes. With today's agreement, the states are in discussions with Becton Dickinson and Quidel—the U.S. manufacturers of antigen tests that have already been authorized by the FDA—to purchase 500,000 tests per state, for a total of three million tests.

Through this interstate compact, states are coming together to ramp up the use of rapid antigen testing to help better detect outbreaks more quickly, and expand long-term testing in congregate settings such as schools, workplaces, and nursing homes.

This interstate cooperative purchasing agreement will provide a unique platform to purchase tests and associated supplies in a sustainable and cost-effective manner. In addition, the states will coordinate on policies and protocols regarding rapid antigen testing technology.

The Rockefeller Foundation stands ready to assist in facilitating financing mechanisms to support this large-scale interstate testing compact.

“With severe shortages and delays in testing and the federal administration attempting to cut funding for testing, the states are banding together to acquire millions of faster tests to help save lives and slow the spread of COVID-19,” said **Governor Hogan**. “I want to thank my fellow governors for signing on to this groundbreaking bipartisan agreement, which we have just finalized after weeks of discussions with the Rockefeller Foundation. We will be working to bring additional states, cities, and local governments on board as this initiative moves forward.”

“Rapid access to testing is crucial in our collective fight against COVID-19, which is why I am grateful to join these other governors in a collaborative effort to purchase testing supplies and help identify outbreaks more quickly, while improving the turnaround time for test results,” said **Governor Bel Edwards.** “COVID does not know any borders and by working together we strengthen our response, improve testing access and ultimately help our communities become safer and healthier.”

“This bipartisan partnership will help us protect our families, the heroes on the front lines of this crisis, small businesses, and our most vulnerable communities,” said **Governor Whitmer.** “Widespread testing is one of the most crucial tools we have to stop the spread of this virus and save lives. I’m proud of the bipartisan work governors across the state have done to protect our regions from COVID-19. I’m hopeful that the president and Congress will follow our lead and work together on a recovery package that includes support for states like ours so we can continue to protect our families.”

“Time is of the essence, which is why I am pleased to join with my fellow governors to work together to expand the use of rapid, point-of-care antigen tests in order to help to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our states,” said **Governor DeWine.**

“The states are leading America’s national response to COVID-19,” said **Governor Northam. “**We are bringing together this bipartisan, multi-state coalition to combine our purchasing power and get rapid testing supplies to our communities as quickly as possible. The people in our six states want to see action, and we’re delivering.”

“We are committed to helping communities across America avoid the tragic consequences of this disease by expanding the use of the latest diagnostic and screening tests so those unwittingly spreading Covid can be isolated and supported,” said **Dr Rajiv Shah, President of The Rockefeller Foundation.** “I am grateful to Governors Hogan, Bel Edwards, Baker, Whitmer, DeWine and Northam for their leadership and partnerships to give workers, teachers, students, and vulnerable people the confidence they need to be safe until a vaccine is developed and proven effective.”

To view the governors' signed letter of intent to the Rockefeller Foundation, click the link below:

- **Testing LOI.pdf**

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