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Voters Deserve COVID-19 Transparency – and Governor Has Chance Today to Deliver

Freedom Fund Asks Governor for Clarity on Handling of COVID-19 Emergency Orders, to Produce Administration Officials to Testify on No-Bid Contract Scandal

LANSING, MI, August 25, 2020 – The Michigan Freedom Fund today asked Governor Gretchen Whitmer to be more transparent with the press and the public by releasing long-requested data surrounding her emergency orders related to COVID-19, and to produce to testify a pair of administration officials who have ducked a state investigation into a canceled no-bid contact-tracing contract with the Governor’s campaign consultants.

“Where are the goal posts, and why won’t the Governor tell Michigan families,” asked Tony Daunt, Executive Director of the Michigan Freedom Fund. “COVID-related hospitalizations and deaths have plummeted, and most of the few ongoing outbreaks are in nursing homes, where the Governor is actively sending COVID-19 patients. If Whitmer won’t be transparent with the press and public about the specific data guiding her lockdown orders, the least she can offer is the specific science and data she requires before lifting them.”

Important questions the Governor should answer today include:

- 1) Media reports and statements from medical examiners indicate some who’ve lost their lives in the state and are classified as “COVID deaths” died from causes other than COVID-19, including suicide.

Will the state open its records today and allow the press to audit death certificates – with names redacted – for those whose deaths have been classified as “COVID-19 deaths?”

- 2) How many of the state’s recorded COVID-19 deaths were confirmed COVID-19 patients who died from complications directly related to the virus?
- 3) Will the Governor produce administration officials – Andrea Taverna and Kathryn Macomber – to testify before the legislature’s Joint Select Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic, or to answer questions from the Auditor General related to the state’s canceled no-bid contact tracing contract with Democratic campaign consultants?
- 4) If they refuse to testify –Taverna has hired a criminal defense attorney to avoid questioning – will Whitmer clean house at MDHHS to ensure transparency going forward?
- 5) With fewer than 500 confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations statewide, nearly 3,000 unused ventilators and less than 100 COVID patients requiring a ventilator– what will it take for Whitmer to end her “state of emergency?”

What specific metrics does the Governor need to see to end her emergency declaration, and to allow Michigan workers and families to fully re-engage?

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