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In March the world changed almost overnight. We are now entering our 13th week since maximized telework began along with a set of safety requirements to secure our workforce from this terrible pandemic. A pandemic is especially challenging for mission essential employees. Those on the front lines are navigating around an invisible threat to keep the lights on for 40 million Americans in their homes and businesses.

Pandemics are crises of communications. We must continue to recognize the criticality of messaging, accurate and aligned information and the need to increase virtual connections with staff, friends and family. It is important we keep communication lines open as we work through the various phases of getting back to normal. This also means understanding the tension these months are bringing to our communities. It is a time to further explore virtual tools that enhance our connections. It is a time to look ahead and keep our eyes on the horizon. We know where we are going, as outlined in our tactical action plans and the Strategic Roadmap 2024.

It is critically important that we continue to practice safe social distancing, wearing of masks and proper hygiene. Now is ***not*** the time to relax these efforts. In fact, like safety, we cannot forget we are in the midst of a pandemic just because we cannot see it or feel it. We have to protect ourselves—and others. I must admit shock when I ventured out this past weekend to pick up one thing at the auto parts store to see the number of people not wearing masks or taking precautions. Remember, we wear masks to protect others. We have to constantly remind ourselves about risk and think through the implications of our actions.

I continue to be impressed at the professionalism of our staff, their leadership and the willingness to, as our core value states: Do what is right. Do what is safe. WAPA's performance has been outstanding as recognized in a review of our mid-year accomplishments all the while the pandemic has been raging. Our teams are working diligently on the return to the workplace efforts and we will continue to communicate these plans. For the rest of us, it means working from home in a supporting role to ensure our maintenance and operations teams are safe and have what they need. It means managing our time well so that we continue to make progress on our core initiatives while operating in the sustained crisis. And we now know we can be flexible, creative and frugal, in uncommon times.

To those who have been adversely affected by this virus, you remain in our hearts as part of our WAPA family. So far, we have two confirmed cases at WAPA with both recovered.

Please continue to practice CDC guidelines to stay safe.

**Mark A. Gabriel | Administrator and Chief Executive Officer**

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