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STATEMENT OF PROSECUTOR WILLIAM VAILLIENCOURT
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A federal action was filed this week challenging the constitutionality of Governor Whitmer's stay-at-home Executive Order. Because one of the parties challenging the Executive Order is a Livingston County resident, I have been included as a party in my capacity as Livingston County Prosecutor. Prosecutors from other counties have also been included as parties. The federal action asks the federal court to rule on the constitutionality of the Governor's actions and she will now have the opportunity to defend the scope and validity of her order.

We are experiencing an unprecedented health emergency where hundreds of Livingston County residents have been infected and some have died. The people of Livingston County have gone above-and-beyond to protect themselves and our community. I encourage that continued vigilance.

In Livingston County, we have approached this crisis with common sense by encouraging voluntary compliance. We want people to remain safe and healthy, but we are also extraordinarily sensitive to and supportive of the rights and civil liberties of our citizens.

We have not issued any criminal charges for violating the Executive Orders. Criminal enforcement is not the answer to this health crisis and that has been my consistent message to law enforcement. Consistent with that priority and in the exercise of my discretion as Prosecutor, none of the individuals in this lawsuit have been at risk of being prosecuted by my office. Any prosecution in those instances would have to come through the Attorney General's office.

The rule of law is paramount in this country, especially in times such as these. The bottom line is that the issues raised in this action are with the Governor and the Executive Order, not my office. The Governor will have the opportunity to be heard and make her case, and the federal court will decide.

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