Hello my fellow Nevadans.

As all of you know, Nevada had our first two presumptive cases of COVID-19 announced this past week, so I wanted to take the opportunity to give Nevadans a status update, and what we have done to prepare as we look ahead.

We’ve all seen this situation develop quickly here in Nevada, around the country, and around the globe. When situations develop quickly, it can lead to misinformation. And misinformation can lead to panic, which doesn’t do anybody any good.

My goal today is to provide the most accurate update possible on the current COVID-19 situation in Nevada, the preventative measures that the State of Nevada and local health authorities are taking in order to contain a spread and keep our citizens healthy and safe.

First, a status update on COVID-19 in Nevada:

- On Wednesday evening, the Southern Nevada Health District determined that an individual based in Clark County is presumptive positive for COVID-19.

- Presumptive positive means that the individual tested positive for COVID-19 by a public health lab, but we must wait for the federal Centers for Disease Control to confirm that result. That result should be coming in soon.
The man is currently being cared for in isolation at a hospital.

A second individual based in Washoe County also received a presumptive positive test for the virus on Thursday. The individual was recently traveling aboard a cruise ship where he was potentially exposed to the virus.

The Washoe County-based individual is currently in self-isolation at home.

On March 4 th and 5 th of last week, the State was notified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that forty Nevadans were passengers on the Grand Princess cruise ship and disembarked from the ship on February 21 st , including the presumptive case in Washoe County.

I’m proud to say that Nevada’s local health authorities responded immediately to contact and assess all passengers for sign of illness.

And finally, the best news of the week:

Last night Washoe County Health District announced that all COVID-19 testing that was conducted Friday came back negative, including all students at Huffaker Elementary School who were tested. The negative result includes the family member of the resident who tested presumptive positive for COVID-19 on Thursday.

The recent announcement of two presumptive cases in the State of Nevada have led to some questions over lab testing in our state, so I’d like to provide some facts:
I know a lot of Nevadans have questions on why certain people are getting tested and why others are not. I want to assure you that our local health authorities have been responsible stewards in their administration of screenings and risk assessments based on existing CDC guidelines, but I believe we all share the same desire to test even more people, as necessary.

As of last week, Nevada had two designated public laboratories for COVID-19 testing, the State Public Health Laboratory located in Northern Nevada and the Southern Nevada Health District Public Health Laboratory located in Las Vegas.

Yesterday, I had a call with U.S. Senators Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen who have been fighting tirelessly on our behalf in Washington D.C., along with the rest of the federal delegation. They immediately got in touch with HHS and later confirmed that commercial labs, including Quest and Lab Corps, have been provisionally approved to begin testing in Nevada in the near future.

Additionally, I also spoke with one of the lead staff members on Vice President Pence’s COVID-19 Task Force and made it incredibly clear that I agree with Nevada residents in their desire to expand testing, and Nevada could only reach that goal with cooperation and resources from the CDC.

A few hours after that initial call, my office was on the line with the Deputy Director and ranking staff of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

On that call, we received a strong commitment to the people of Nevada that our two public labs will be receiving additional testing resources to expand our ability to test thousands more people, as needed, based upon the expertise and assessments of our public health officials.

I want to thank our two public labs and local health authorities for working closely with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services on this request to the CDC. This is great news for our State.
To summarize, Nevadans work together. When we discovered we had two presumptive cases of COVID-19 this week, we didn’t underreact, we didn’t overreact – we reacted. We took swift action and worked together.

In the past week, there were road bumps and challenges, but every Nevadan should join me in being proud of our local and state health authorities, and the collaboration and communication exhibited between our local, state and federal leaders. We learned lessons, we improved, we identified needs, and we made the calls. I can tell you this, the CDC is listening.

This is what Nevada does – we roll up our sleeves, we put titles aside, and we get to work to keep our people safe. We’ve been tested before, and we came out more resilient than ever.

I know that we’re likely to face some challenges ahead, but I am confident that our Battle Born spirit can get us through anything.

No one agency, elected official, office, hospital or lab can fix this alone – it takes all of us, and that’s what you’re seeing in Nevada.

Our community is coming together, and I’ve heard from all corners of our state how people are stepping up – health professionals, insurance companies, hospitals, organizations, and more, who are ready to work together for all of Nevada.

Most importantly, I want to thank our healthcare workers and medical professionals on the front lines. This week serves as a reminder of their dedication to caring for the people of Nevada. Our state is better and safer because of all of you, and we can’t thank you enough.

Over the coming days and weeks, our office will continue to collaborate and support a coordinated response with all levels of government to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
This will include doing our best to answer the questions you may have. You’ll hear from folks like our Superintendent of Schools, Director of Public Safety, State Insurance Commissioner, and State Epidemiologist – all who will provide insight on how they are working together to prevent and prepare, not panic.

Finally, the best way to protect yourself and your family and prevent infection, is to take similar precautions as you would take to avoid the flu:
  o Wash your hands
  o Avoid close contact with people who are sick
  o Clean and disinfect frequently

For a full list of frequently asked questions and tips, please visit your local health authorities website, the CDC, or the Nevada State Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

I’m your Governor, but I’m also a Dad, a husband, and a son. Let’s look out for each other and our loved ones.

I encourage all Nevadans to **Prepare, not Panic, and continue to choose collaboration over chaos.**

I will work with our health authorities to continue to provide accurate information on this situation as it’s confirmed. The information I shared today is the most up-to-date we currently have. Thank you all for being here. When more information develops, our public health authorities and experts will continue to keep Nevada updated.