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16th District State Senate Candidate Calls for More Testing and Safety Equipment

Walla Walla - In response to the [April 30 news](#) that there are over 56 new positive cases of COVID-19 out of the 400 tests that have been performed at Tyson Fresh Meat Plant in Wallula, Democratic State Senate Candidate Danielle Garbe Reser is urging more aggressive measures to ensure adequate testing and safety equipment for workplaces and the general public. She released the following statement:

“I send my condolences to all the individuals who have tested positive at the Tyson Fresh Meat Plant and my wishes for their healthy recovery. Thank you to Walla Walla County Department of Community Health and Benton-Franklin Health District for your collaboration to address this issue and assist affected workers. I appreciate the ongoing work of local health care providers to assist the more than 790 individuals with confirmed cases across our district.”

“This development at Tyson underscores how critical it is to follow the safety guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control and Washington State Department of Health. Tyson disregarded those safety provisions until it was too late to prevent a widespread outbreak that put the 1,400 employees, their family members, and our communities at risk. It didn’t have to happen this way, and we must ensure it does not happen again in our district or our state.”

“To be able to protect our essential workers now and to help reopen our economy in the future, we need our state to help employers and our communities source personal protective equipment, accelerate testing and contact tracing, and ensure compliance with safety guidelines. Together, we can keep our communities and our economy healthy.”

As of April 29, there had been 134 positive COVID-19 cases at the Tyson plant. The new cases announced on April 30 bring the total confirmed cases to 190. Many more cases are pending. Individuals affected live in Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla Counties. One Tyson worker, Guadalupe Olivera, died from COVID-19 on April 20. The plant announced on April 23 that it would close for widespread testing and cleaning in coordination with Walla Walla County Department of Community Health.

Danielle Garbe Reser is the Democratic candidate for the Washington State Senate in LD 16 based in Walla Walla. Originally from Moses Lake, she is running to be an advocate for rural Eastern Washington in Olympia. She worked for both Republican and Democratic administrations during her 14-years serving our country as a diplomat and is the former CEO of Sherwood Trust, a private foundation that invests in community and economic development in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties. Learn more about her campaign at www.garbereser.com.

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