

January 13, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President-elect
Office of the President-elect
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

RE: National Vaccination Distribution Plan for Cities

Dear President-elect Biden:

As mayors of the undersigned cities with populations totalling over 40 million, we look forward to you, Vice President-elect Harris, and your administration taking the reins of government on January 20th. We hope to work closely with you to ensure your administration can meet its stated goal of vaccinating 100 million Americans in your first 100 days. However, to meet this ambitious and crucially important challenge, cities need direct access to vaccines, funding to support scaling the distribution infrastructure, and funding to support engagement and outreach to disadvantaged communities that are “vaccine hesitant.”

While it is essential to work with state and local public health agencies, healthcare providers, pharmacies, and clinics, there is a need to be nimble and fill gaps that are unique to each local area. Very few cities are receiving direct allocations, and as a result, the necessary outreach needed to lay the groundwork for your vaccination goals are not being met. Mayors have the ability and expertise to build the local partnerships necessary and fill these gaps, especially when it comes to reaching disadvantaged communities.

Mayors across the country have already established successful testing regimes that can be transitioned to a vaccine administration infrastructure local communities will be familiar with. For example, the City of Los Angeles has tested 3.5 million Angelenos through a streamlined and effective system. In the City of Seattle, despite representing 10% of the state’s population, firefighters are single-handedly carrying out 20% of all statewide testing.

Combining their unique programmatic reach with the success of established testing regimes, mayors are among the best-equipped to mobilize vaccine administration with the support of their credentialed staff like EMTs and paramedics, especially from an

equity perspective. Even for cities like Chicago that are receiving their own vaccine shipments, the doses received are woefully inadequate and simply will not be enough to reach Brown and Black communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

While the traditional healthcare network will be the answer to ongoing vaccinations in the long term, by allocating vaccines directly to cities and providing funding to support their efforts, more vaccines can be administered in a more quick and efficient manner. Indeed, cities have a proven history of accomplishing this: when vaccinating for polio, New York City was able to vaccinate five million people in roughly two weeks. That level of outreach is what your administration needs to meet its goal.

To help plan for this national rollout, we hope to engage with your transition advisors and incoming administration on day one to immediately develop and implement a strategy that allows cities to get their residents vaccinated as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Mayor Eric Garcetti, City of Los Angeles, CA
Mayor Jenny A. Durkan, City of Seattle, WA
Mayor John Giles, City of Mesa, AZ
Mayor Bill de Blasio, City of New York, NY
Mayor Steve Adler, City of Austin, TX
Mayor Ted Wheeler, City of Portland, OR
Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, City of Chicago, IL
Mayor Kate Gallego, City of Phoenix, AZ
Mayor Sam Liccardo, City of San Jose, CA
Mayor Ron Nirenberg, City of San Antonio, TX
Mayor LaToya Cantrell, City of New Orleans, LA
Mayor Mike Duggan, City of Detroit, MI
Mayor Michael B. Hancock, City and County of Denver, CO
Mayor Greg Fischer, City of Louisville, KY
Mayor Vi Lyles, City of Charlotte, NC
Mayor Todd Gloria, City of San Diego, CA
Mayor Mike Coffman, City of Aurora, CO
Mayor Sylvester Turner, City of Houston, TX
Mayor London Breed, City and County of San Francisco
Mayor Erin Mendenhall, City of Salt Lake City, UT
Mayor Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee, WI
Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, City of Atlanta, GA

Mayor James Brainard, City of Carmel, IN
Mayor Sue Himmelrich, City of Santa Monica, CA
Mayor Jim Kenney, City of Philadelphia, PA
Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, City of Madison, WI
Mayor John Cooper, City of Nashville, TN
Mayor Eric Johnson, City of Dallas, TX
Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter, City of San Leandro, CA
Mayor Libby Schaaf, City of Oakland, CA
Mayor Regina Romero, City of Tucson, AZ
Mayor Jerry Dyer, City of Fresno, CA
Mayor Chris Rogers, City of Santa Rosa, CA
Mayor Steve Benjamin, City of Columbia, SC
Mayor Cassie Franklin, City of Everett, WA
Mayor Jacob Frey, City of Minneapolis, MN