

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**THE GENERAL COURT**

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

February 15, 2021

The Honorable Charles D. Baker, Jr.  
Office of the Governor  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Subject: Urgent

Dear Governor Baker:

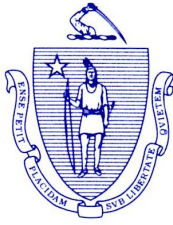
Thank you and your team for the work you've all done in this very challenging pandemic and the vaccine rollout.

However, we are writing to ask that your office immediately implement *a targeted strategy to leverage our community health care organizations' expertise and experience. These organizations include our community health centers and community hospitals*, senior centers, and primary care offices as your essential partners in fighting this health crisis and ensuring equitable access to the vaccine.

Across the Commonwealth, we have community health centers, community hospitals, health departments, and primary care offices that stand ready to assist our communities in this vaccination rollout effort. Their steadfast commitment to providing an equitable pandemic response is evidenced by their near-universal participation in the following area-wide community health efforts: COVID testing, their participation in the Stop the Spread Program and conducting testing in neighborhood settings, by staffing homeless quarantine sites, by conducting contact tracing as part of the Partners in Health contact tracing collaborative, and, since early in the pandemic, ensuring a linguistically and culturally diverse COVID education and outreach effort, community outreach and much more.

They did all this while ensuring continued access to much needed primary care. Let these local and primary care providers, which have our communities' trust, become this necessary contact to get our people vaccinated without further delay.

While we fully understand that vaccine supply is severely limited, we ask that you prioritize community health centers, community hospitals, primary care offices and health departments in this rollout effort.



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Finally, as you know, many residents across our Commonwealth, especially our vulnerable residents - - the elderly and the disabled, not only are having difficulties navigating your online appointment system, but often also lack transportation options to get to one of the mass assigned sites. Clearly, the mass sites should be optional for folks that have the means to do it and not the only choice for those who cannot. For our homebound populations, we should have some ability to both identify them and deploy their vaccinations. My office has received calls daily and hourly, and we find ourselves hearing these same pleas for help over and over, but without the information to convey to them that this help is on the way. This issue is fast becoming critical.

Please also include the following group immediately as part of your Phase 2 rollout:

- 65+ age group
- Teachers
- Population with asthma
- Postal workers and funeral workers
- Anyone considered high risk by their doctors

Community health centers and community hospitals have been a trusted focal point for community health in our region across the 351 towns and cities. There are 200 of us in the legislature, and we hear from our constituents on daily. We respectfully request that you designate community health centers, primary care offices, and community hospitals, as well as the local health departments as key partners in offering vaccinations to our community immediately. For myself and my office, we stand ready to assist in these efforts in any and every way. Together, we can and will win the battle against this virus.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

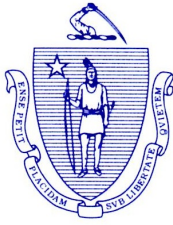
**Vanna Howard**  
State Representative  
17<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

**Jessica A. Giannino**  
State Representative  
16<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District

**Jacob Oliveira**  
State Representative  
7<sup>th</sup> Hampden District

**Danillo Sena**  
State Representative  
37<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

**Lori Ehrlich**  
State Representative  
8<sup>th</sup> Essex District



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11th Bristol District

**Tram T. Nguyen**

State Representative  
18th Essex District

**Steve Owens**

State Representative  
29th Middlesex District

**Brian W. Murray**

State Representative  
10th Worcester District

**Lindsay Sabadosa**

State Representative  
1st Hampshire District

**Patricia Duffy**

State Representative  
5<sup>th</sup> Hampden District

**Jamie Eldridge**

State Senator  
Middlesex and Worcester District

**Meghan K. Kilcoyne**

State Representative  
12th Worcester District

**Carmine Gentile**

State Representative  
13<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

**John H. Rogers**

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12<sup>th</sup> Norfolk District

**Edward Philips**

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8<sup>th</sup> Norfolk District

**Adam Gomez**

State Senator  
Hampden District

**Edward J. Kennedy**

State Senator  
1<sup>st</sup> Middlesex District

**Susannah Whipp**

State Representative  
2<sup>nd</sup> Franklin District

**Michael Kushmerek**

State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Worcester District

**Carol Doherty**

State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Bristol District

**Brandy Fluker Oakley**

State Representative  
12<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District

**Tackey Chan**

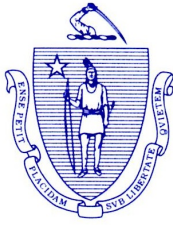
State Representative  
2<sup>nd</sup> Norfolk District

**John J. Cronin**

State Senator  
Worcester and Middlesex District

**Tami Gouveia**

State Representative  
14<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District



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**Linda Dean Campbell**  
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**Mike Connolly**  
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**Diana DiZoglio**  
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**David Robertson**  
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19<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

**Rady Mom**  
State Representative  
18<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

**Carlos Gonzalez**  
State Representative  
10<sup>th</sup> Hampden District

**Christine Barber**  
State Representative  
34<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District

cc:

Lt. Governor Karen Polito  
HHS Secretary Marylou Sudders  
Senate President Karen Spilka  
House Speaker Ronald Mariano