



December 3, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar  
Secretary, US Dept. of HHS  
Office of the Secretary  
200 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Christopher Miller  
Acting Secretary, US Dept. of Defense  
Office of the Secretary  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretaries Azar and Miller,

On behalf of the District of Columbia health care community, I want to thank you for your tremendous work in moving Operation Warp Speed forward and the assistance provided to health providers during this pandemic. I am writing today on behalf of the District's 14 hospitals and other health care providers, to encourage the Centers for Disease Control and Operation Warp Speed to increase the vaccine allocation to the District of Columbia. The health care workforce in Washington, DC totals more than 85,000 and District hospitals routinely provide about 1 million patient care days each year. Moreover, Washington, DC is home to four level-one trauma centers, verified by the American College of Surgeons. Our 14 hospitals, including the Veteran's Administration hospital, play a major role in delivering health care not only to District residents but the region as well.

Currently, the District of Columbia is slated to receive about 7,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine in the first distribution. Given that the current formula is based solely on population, this initial allocation will provide protection for less than 10% of the city's health care workforce. Utilizing the same formula for future allocations would have a detrimental impact on our ability to provide this most important protection to our health care workers given the time it would take to reach even a simple majority of the health care workforce.

Our plea is for Operation Warp Speed to consider the District's geographic location in determining its allocation. 75% of the city's health care workforce resides outside its borders, which skews the impact of any allocation based on population. Although it is its own separate jurisdiction, we are distinctive in that there is routine and significant movement of the population between Maryland, Virginia, and the District. There are also a significant number of people who work in the District and live in either Maryland or Virginia, and vice versa.

Despite their state of residence, they are part of the necessary workforce and critical infrastructure that ensures access to quality health care for the millions of patients who reside in the Washington Metropolitan region and seek their care in Washington, DC.

DC Hospitals and other health providers believe it is in the best interest of our community that our health care workers receive their inoculations where they work rather than where live. Moreover, as the Nation's

*The District of Columbia Hospital Association is a unifying force working to advance hospitals and health systems in the District of Columbia by promoting policies and initiatives that strengthen our system of care, preserve access and promote better health outcomes for the patients and communities they serve.*

Capitol, the District is responsible for managing frequent national security events and it is critical that our health care workers are protected and available to respond to the District's unique local and national roles for health and public safety.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and attention to this matter. I am happy to answer any questions you or your teams may have regarding the request. I can be reached at [jbowens@dcha.org](mailto:jbowens@dcha.org).

Sincerely,



Jacqueline D. Bowens  
President & CEO

Cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-DC  
The Honorable Muriel Bowser, Mayor, District of Columbia  
The Honorable Robert R. Redfield, MD, Director CDC  
LaQuandra Nesbitt, MD, MPH, Director, DC Health  
Rick Pollack, President & CEO, American Hospital Association  
John Rockwood, Chair, DCHA Board of Directors