



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

December 3, 2020

Dr. Moncef Slaoui, Chief Advisor
General Gustave F. Perna, Chief Operating Officer
Operation Warp Speed
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Slaoui and General Perna:

Since the start of the pandemic, the development of a vaccine has been top of mind for us all, and I applaud Operation Warp Speed (OWS) for getting us close to a safe and equitable distribution of a vaccine before the end of the year. The immediate and rapid action taken by OWS will save lives and help our communities begin the critical recovery work ahead of us. We agree with the recent CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' recommendation to prioritize healthcare workers to receive the first available doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and our local plan mirrors that recommendation. However, the proposed one-size-fits-all formula for distribution to states based up resident population will prove woefully insufficient for the District of Columbia, providing less than 10% of the doses DC would need to meet that recommendation.

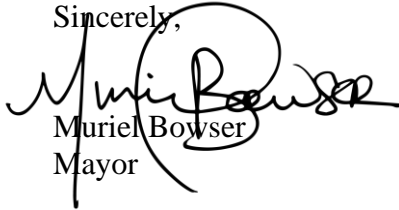
In Washington, DC, we have a healthcare workforce of approximately 80,000 workers. If the early vaccine allotment remains tied to our population, we will receive doses for less than 10% of our healthcare workers. It is critical to ensure that the healthcare workforce of the nation's capital can be immunized and continue their vital work to mitigate the continued impacts of the pandemic.

Washington, DC is unique; our population swells during regular business hours, with a significant number of federal and healthcare workers commuting into the District from their homes in Maryland and Virginia. In fact, approximately 75 percent of healthcare workers in the District are residents of Maryland or Virginia. To that end, the current plan to distribute vaccine doses to states and the District based on population size will leave the District unable to provide vaccinations to the vast majority of our healthcare workers. To rectify this, we ask the federal government to apportion Washington, DC's early vaccine allotment based upon our workforce population, which is more in alignment with our healthcare delivery needs, rather than our residential population.

Public health resources must extend beyond residency if we are to keep all those who work and live in Washington, DC safe. That is the approach we have taken in our coronavirus testing strategy; resulting in the District having the highest level of testing per capita of any jurisdiction in the country. This approach that will help keep District residents and our federal and private sector workers safe until authorized vaccines become more widely available. My Administration, led by the DC Department of Health, has spent months developing the District's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan to ensure DC has the necessary infrastructure to support a coordinated vaccine distribution and administration system for healthcare workers; critical infrastructure workers; specific vulnerable populations, including those with a higher risk of severe morbidity and mortality due to COVID-19; as well as all District residents. We stand ready to begin an equitable, and safe distribution of the vaccine.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring this issue to your attention, and we look forward to discussing this challenge with the OWS team.

Sincerely,



Muriel Bowser
Mayor