



CALIFORNIA LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

February 4, 2021

Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout for Farmworkers

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the CA Latino Legislative Caucus, we write to follow up on our numerous urgent pleas to protect our state's farmworkers and other key essential workers from the scourge of COVID-19. While we are grateful that farmworkers have been assigned to Tier 1 of Phase 1B of the statewide vaccination plan, we are gravely concerned that such prioritization will be illusory and ineffective without an immediate and targeted statewide action by your Administration. Time is of the essence so it is imperative that the Administration release its plans to meet the health needs, particularly the timely and equitable vaccination, of our most vulnerable and essential workers.

Throughout this pandemic, farmworkers have not stopped working. To do so would jeopardize our nation's food supply. Accordingly, farmworkers, who are predominantly Latino, continue to get infected and die at disproportionately higher rates than the general population. To arrest this tragic situation we need a targeted vaccine strategy.

Evidence to date suggests that current, more traditional vaccine distribution channels are not sufficient to reach this vulnerable, hard to reach population. They are hard to reach because they largely live in rural areas, fear government assistance due to immigration status concerns, face language barriers, and lack access to technology and internet. That is why we need a robust community-based vaccine outreach campaign. Vaccines should be allocated based on the number of farmworkers in a given region, even if this means distributing directly to cities, neighborhoods, growers, and trusted community-based organizations. Outreach methods by trusted messengers also need to be culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. We look forward to hearing from you on the Administration's plans to protect our most vulnerable and essential workers. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

MARIA ELENA DURAZO
Chair, CA Latino Legislative Caucus
Senator, 24th District

ROBERT RIVAS
Vice Chair, CA Latino Legislative Caucus
Assemblymember, 30th District

cc: HHS Secretary Mark Ghaly
CDPH Director Tómas Aragón

(CHAIR)
Senator María Elena Durazo

(VICE CHAIR)
Assemblymember Robert Rivas

SENATORS

Bob Archuleta, Anna Caballero, Susan Talamantes Eggman, Lena A. Gonzalez, Ben Hueso, Melissa Hurtado, Monique Limón, Susan Rubio

ASSEMBLYMEMBERS

Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Joaquin Arambula, Lisa Calderon, Wendy Carrillo, Sabrina Cervantes, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Todd Gloria, Lorena Gonzalez, Jose Medina, Sharon Quirk-Silva, James Ramos, Speaker Anthony Rendon, Eloise Gómez Reyes, Luz Rivas, Freddie Rodriguez, Blanca E. Rubio, Rudy Salas, Miguel Santiago, Carlos Villapudua

1020 N Street, Suite 511 • Sacramento, CA 95814 • Phone (916) 651-1535