

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 29, 2021

The Honorable Peter Gaynor  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Mr. Bob Fenton  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of FEMA Administrator  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20472

C/O: Peter Taylor, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region 7

Dear Acting Secretary Gaynor and Mr. Fenton,

We write in reference to President Biden's January 21 Memorandum, which will provide reimbursement to states to support vaccine distribution and administration, at a 100% cost share until September 30, 2021.

According to recent reports published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Missouri's vaccination rates fall below the average inoculation rates for other states of comparable size and population. While Missouri has administered nearly half of the doses that have been distributed to the state – a statistic on par with the majority of other states – the logistical challenges of transporting and administering multiple doses of the COVID-19 vaccines to underserved parts of the state remains a challenge, as well as to other states within Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 7.

Within FEMA Region 7, which includes Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri, vaccination rates fall below that of their FEMA region counterparts. It appears that the special challenges which correspond to states with significant rural and underserved populations were not accounted for by the federal government. This may be why no state within FEMA Region 7 currently falls within the top half of the CDC's list of vaccination.

Therefore, Missouri's State Emergency Management Agency will be working with FEMA Region 7 staff to communicate the state's unique needs. As statewide leaders and public servants on the ground continue efforts to distribute vaccines, Missouri is in need of transportation and distribution assistance, and the supplemental funding provided to FEMA from Congress through the Fiscal Year 2021 funding bill should be used within the state and region for its intended purpose – to help get vaccines into the field.

We respectfully request your prompt action to ensure that these communities receive the immediate support needed to respond to the pandemic. Along with our fellow Missourians, we appreciate your attention to this request and stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincere regards,



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Roy Blunt  
United States Senator



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Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

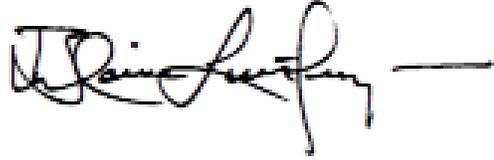
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Josh Hawley  
United States Senator



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Blaine Luetkemeyer  
Member of Congress



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Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



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Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress



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Billy Long  
Member of Congress



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Jason Smith  
Member of Congress