



ANGELO SANTABARBARA
Assemblyman 111th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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Subcommittee on Autism
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Energy
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Veterans' Affairs

December 11th, 2020

The Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor, State of New York
State Capitol Building
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I write to you with an urgent request to include emergency medical services (EMS) personnel in Phase 1A of the COVID-19 vaccine allocation plan here in New York State – a recommendation made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. This is consistent with the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccines (2020) that also recommends first responders, including ambulance emergency medical technicians, paramedics and personnel for the first phase of the vaccine allocation.

As frontline caregivers and often the first healthcare providers that a patient encounters, those in the EMS field, both paid and unpaid, provide care in an uncontrolled environment and the confined space of an ambulance. These healthcare providers have the potential for direct and indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and should be included among first to receive the vaccine—they too place themselves at an extraordinary risk of contracting the virus that is at least that of and in some cases more so than their hospital-based healthcare colleagues.

The reality is, even before COVID-19 hit far too many ambulance services here in upstate New York were forced to close their doors while others have been operating short staffed for years, and those challenges have only increased during the pandemic. They simply cannot afford to lose more members for extended periods of time and continue providing the medical care that has saved lives during this critical time.

Given the heightened role they have served during these past months, I urge you to recognize the need to include them in the top tier of distribution once the COVID-19 vaccine is available. With this decision we can help these institutions that are out there protecting our families and communities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara
New York State Assembly Chair of the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources