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February 11, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

As the Imperial County Board of Supervisors, we write with another urgent message of need for additional vaccine allocations for our community. As one of the hardest hit counties in this country by COVID-19, we are writing to demand an increased allocation of vaccines for Imperial County. The small number of allocations that we have been receiving weekly, coupled with the continuous additions, changes, or clarifications that your administration makes to the vaccine immunization tier system, high case rates, and limited number of healthcare providers continues to increase the hardship and anxiety that our community is suffering.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, you and your administration has declared its commitment to health equity. Including, most recently, in the two press conferences held this week in San Diego and Fresno. "Equity" was and has been a theme that has resonated in your messages in regard to COVID-19 response efforts, yet we ask, where is the equity in the vaccine allocation distribution to counties? When one compares the number of vaccines that similar sized counties with lower poverty rates, higher median household incomes, and less deaths due to COVID-19 with Imperial County's figures, the inequity is evident (see table below).

County	Population	Vaccine Doses Administered (1st & 2nd)	Poverty Rate	Median Household Income	Positive Cases	Deaths	Latino Population
Imperial	191,649	15,557	22%	\$47,622	26,522	574	85%
El Dorado	193,098	25,208	8.70%	\$83,377	8,682	86	13.20%
Madera	160,089	13,873	17.60%	\$57,585	14,925	189	58.80%
Napa	139,652	27,388	7.40%	\$88,596	8,769	61	34.60%
Shasta	177,925	18,962	13.30%	\$54,667	10,645	164	10.50%

On California's COVID-19 website where your administration provides data regarding infections by group, it states that "the distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases reveals significant disparities within California's overall racial and ethnic demographics, with Latino and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander groups having disproportionate number of cases relative to their population in the state." This site also

states that the death rate for Latinos is 21% higher than statewide. This is highly concerning, and these factors should be taken into consideration when determining the allocations for each county in order to ensure equity.

As stated in our previous correspondence that we sent last month pleading for additional vaccines, the equity and distribution of the vaccine does not seem to meet the needs of Imperial County, nor your expressed original intent of prioritizing communities hardest hit by this pandemic. With your directive of equity and Imperial County's Latino population at 85%, poverty rate at 22%, lower median household income, and higher positive cases and deaths than the similar sized counties above, we should receive higher allocations of vaccines.

Due to the nominal amount of vaccines that we have received, we have not been able to move into the second tier of the distribution plan. More importantly, many of our local law enforcement and most of our farmworkers, both industries that play a critical, essential role in the daily operations of our community and the latter in sustaining our nation's food supply, have not been inoculated. As a matter of fact, more than half of the vegetables eaten by Americans during the winter come from Imperial County's agricultural fields.

Imperial County staff, along with the assistance of so many organizations and individuals, have been administering vaccines expeditiously upon receipt. We are confident that the County and our partners and providers can distribute more in a safe and efficient manner, if received.

Again, we urge you to help us help you achieve equity in COVID-19 response and vaccination efforts. Please recognize Imperial County as a county that has an opportunity to assist a region with extreme circumstances that can be corrected in short term with the appropriate vaccine allocation.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Kelley  
Chairman



Jesus Eduardo Escobar  
Vice Chairman



Luis A Plancarte  
District 2



Ryan E. Kelley  
District 4



Raymond R. Castillo  
District 5

cc: Honorable Ben Hueso  
Honorable Eduardo Garcia