



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo: Proper protocols for COVID-19 vaccine must be stringently followed

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO January 27, 2021

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In a letter to New York State's congressional delegation, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, urged the federal representatives to ensure that the proper safety and clinical trial protocols for the COVID-19 vaccine are stringently followed regardless of demand.

The Senator's correspondence comes after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently updated its guidance to indicate that the second dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine can be schedule up to six weeks after the first dose if necessary. Following earlier clinical trials and testing, both pharmaceutical companies, as well as the Food and Drug Administration, have said that second doses should be given at specific intervals – 21 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna.

"Lives are at stake, and there can be no cutting corners when you are dealing with life and death," Sen. Griffo said. "Clinical tests have indicated that both Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines must be received within a certain amount of time. If we are following science and medicine, then we should adhere to the recommendations established by the entities that have conducted the trials and done the research." Sen. Griffo also has written to Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser on COVID-19, to express his concerns.

The full text of Sen. Griffo's letter to the state's congressional delegation is below:

I am writing regarding updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention pertaining to when individuals may receive their second dose of the coronavirus vaccine.

In a statement dated Jan. 4, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration indicated that changes to the agency's authorized dosing or schedules would be "premature and not rooted solidly in the available evidence" and could place the public at risk without appropriate data to support changes in vaccine administration. Additionally, it has been determined that the protocols established for the vaccine - 21 days for the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine and 28 days for Moderna's vaccine - must be adhered to as a result of clinical trials performed by both companies. Despite this documentation and clinical trials and research, the CDC has now specified that the second dose can be schedule up to six weeks later if necessary.

While I recognize that there is an evolving understanding of the virus and the vaccine, I am concerned that the changing guidance may be an effort to accelerate and ensure availability in vaccination efforts. Constantly changing guidance such as this causes confusion and results in many questions regarding pandemic directives and guidance. We have seen this when it comes to the wearing of masks and some other mitigation efforts. This confusion can erode the public's confidence in the vaccination process and cause consternation. As such, I urge you to ensure that the proper safety and trial protocols for this vaccine are stringently followed regardless of demand. By doing so, we can grow and restore public confidence in the vaccine.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

New York State Senator, 47th Senate District