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NEW YORK
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SENATE



SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN
43RD SENATE DISTRICT

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January 14, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

I write advocating on behalf of nursing homes and long-term care facilities in my 43rd Senate District and across our state that are facing serious challenges – most notably, COVID-related sustained staffing shortfalls – and urgently require immediate assistance.

Numerous constituents with loved ones in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, as well as staff at these entities, have contacted me. They have expressed growing alarm over a lack of facility staffing to ensure a proper continuum of care for residents in the face of the Omicron surge. Facility staff testing positive for this COVID variant and your administration's vaccine mandate are driving the shortfall that is further exacerbated by New York's long-term nursing shortage. The vulnerability of nursing home residents to COVID, as well as other chronic health issues, necessitates a robust response at all levels of government.

Accordingly, I request that you mobilize the entirety of highly skilled, expertly trained, medics, nurses, and technicians in the New York National Guard and immediately deploy them to nursing homes and long-term care facilities needing assistance in battling the Omicron surge. I also request that non-medical National Guard members be deployed to serve in vital support roles – including essential duties such as basic cleaning and maintenance – to alleviate the pressure on overloaded nursing home and long-term care facility staff.

I recognize, and appreciate, that you already initiated the deployment of 120 New York National Guard members to 13 long-term care facilities across the state, including Mohawk Valley Health System and Loretto Health and Rehabilitation. In addition, the State Department of Health launched an expedited EMT certification for National Guard members to support our healthcare facilities and their exhausted staff. However, as the situation at other nursing home and long-term care facilities statewide has grown ever direr, additional deployments utilizing the full strength, expertise, and logistical excellence of the New York National Guard are now urgently required.

Governor, senior citizens in nursing homes and long-term care facilities are among our most vulnerable populations and bore much of the pandemic's deadly burden in 2020 and 2021. New York State cannot fail them again! The immediate full-scale mobilization of the New York National Guard to support our overburdened nursing homes and long-term care facilities can help avert another wave of suffering and tragedy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daphne V. Jordan".

Daphne Jordan
State Senator, 43rd District