

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



**SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE**  
48TH DISTRICT  
OSWEGO, JEFFERSON, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTIES

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE MINORITY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
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MILITARY AFFAIRS  
WOMEN'S ISSUES  
MEMBER  
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON RURAL  
RESOURCES

December 11, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor  
Executive Chamber  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12225

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I write to you today regarding New York's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan and specifically, its omission of emergency medical services (EMS) personnel from the top vaccine priority tier. It is my understanding that EMS personnel are no longer in the "High Risk" category and as such, they are not slated to receive the COVID-19 vaccine during the first round of its distribution.

EMS personnel operate in a unique work environment, often times in confined spaces for extended periods. Frequently, they interface with healthcare workers and at times, COVID-19 patients. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended that EMS personnel be included in the first phase of vaccinations. Their recommendation is consistent with that of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), which suggests in their recently released "Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine," that first responders—including emergency medical technicians (EMTs), paramedics and related personnel—receive vaccinations during the first phase of distribution.

REPLY TO:  ALBANY OFFICE: ROOM 302, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247 (518) 455-3438  
 JEFFERSON COUNTY OFFICE: 317 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 418, WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601 (315) 782-3418  
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EMS personnel play an integral role in protecting the health and safety of people across New York State. Throughout the pandemic, they have tirelessly worked on the frontlines and are often times the first to encounter patients who are ill or suspected to have the coronavirus. It is imperative they, like other frontline healthcare workers, be included in the top tier of vaccine distribution.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patty Ritchie". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops.

Patty Ritchie  
State Senator

cc: Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health

STATE OF NEW YORK  
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ALBANY, NY 12224  
MEMBER OF THE  
NEW YORK STATE SENATE