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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS CAUCUS AND METROWEST CAUCUS REQUEST ANSWERS FROM BAKER ADMINISTRATION ABOUT VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

Legislators share concerns and questions about the COVID-19 vaccine in Massachusetts

BOSTON– **Representative James O’Day (D-West Boylston), Representative Carolyn Dykema (D-Holliston), and Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury)** along with their colleagues in the MetroWest and Central Massachusetts regions sent a letter on Wednesday to Governor Charles Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, and Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders to express their concerns and questions about the COVID-19 vaccination program.

While the group of legislators recognizes the extraordinary task of community-wide vaccination, they urge the Baker-Polito Administration to take additional steps to prepare for the future and alleviate the concerns of local residents.

“We hear daily from our constituents about the troubles they have encountered when trying to schedule a vaccination appointment and find information about the rollout”, said **Representative James O’Day (D-West Boylston)**. “We have the same exact questions and concerns- without any clear, concise answers to provide. We want to help our constituents and every Massachusetts resident, but can only do that with more guidance and support from the Administration.”

“Our pandemic recovery and safety of our residents will depend on providing an organized process for vaccine delivery and clear communication with the public,” said **Representative Carolyn Dykema (D-Holliston)**. “Massachusetts has a wealth of talent and expertise and we should be leading the country in demonstrating what an efficient and effective COVID-19 vaccine program looks like. As legislators, we’re committed to working with the administration to get this right and to making sure that all of our constituents have access to these life-saving vaccines.”

"It has been disheartening to hear from so many constituents on the difficulties that are being faced in this rollout. The current system is not good enough, and there is a need for clearer communication and better coordination with senior centers and towns to expedite the process," said **Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury)**. "I thank the Lieutenant Governor for taking the time to speak to me and explain the improvements that are going to be made, but given the months the administration had to prepare for this rollout, we should not be in a situation of needing to make significant changes to the process."

The delegation raised concerns about the following:

- Alignment of vaccine supply with timelines for phases
 - Vaccine supply and current estimates
 - How frequently timelines will be adjusted based on actual availability
- Communication and messaging
 - Improved communication tools to share with constituents
- Consistent accounting for doses received
 - Total number of vaccines shipped directly to the Commonwealth for distribution
 - Total number of vaccines shipped from the federal government to other distribution points
- Homebound senior citizens
 - System to allow medical professional to visit homebound residents
 - Expected role of senior centers
- Hospitals, medical offices, and clinics
 - Policy to ensure all vaccines are used
 - Discussions that have occurred with major healthcare networks
 - Outreach to patients in demographically or geographically high-risk areas
- Mass vaccination sites
 - Plan for mass vaccination sites in Central Massachusetts and MetroWest
 - Guidance on the criteria for mass vaccination sites
 - Accessibility for mobility-impaired
- Municipal public health infrastructure
 - Health departments as distribution sites
 - Waiting lists
- Policy for distributing Pfizer/ Moderna vaccines and addressing unused doses
 - Process for determining which sites receive Pfizer vs. Moderna vaccine
- Website upgrades
 - Centralized website
 - Pre-registration tool or similar feature

The delegation eagerly looks forward to working with Governor Baker and will follow up with the Administration in a timely manner given the urgency of this matter.

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