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**METROWEST AND CENTRAL MASS LEGISLATORS REQUEST ANSWERS FROM
BAKER ADMINISTRATION ABOUT VACCINE DISTRIBUTION**

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

BOSTON— Representative **Carolyn Dykema of Holliston** and Representative **James O’Day of West Boylston**, along with 29 of their colleagues in the MetroWest and Central Massachusetts delegations, sent a letter on Wednesday to Governor Baker, Lt. Governor 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 urged the Baker-Polito administration to take additional steps to prepare for the future and alleviate the concerns of local residents. In the last week, many residents have raised concerns about the process for the first Phase 2 individuals to sign up to receive the vaccine, expressing frustration with the lack of infrastructure and public engagement to support the distribution process.

“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 Dykema**. “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.”

“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 O’Day**. “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.”

“It is clear that the existing process needs immediate improvement. Our goal is to work with the Administration to ensure the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out is highly organized and effective, administering shots to those eligible as quickly as vaccines are distributed to the state,” said **Representative Hannah Kane of Shrewsbury**.

“Residents across the Commonwealth are depending on the state to provide them with the pathway back to their jobs, their friends and family, their sense of normal,” said **Representative David Linsky of Natick**. “We need to ensure that getting a vaccine is a straightforward process that is easily accessible by all of our residents.”

“While I certainly share my constituents’ and colleagues’ concerns about the bumpy vaccine rollout and lack of clear messaging, the primary issue is the lack of supply,” said **Representative Alice Peisch of Wellesley**. “I am hopeful that the supply will increase soon as a result of the Biden Administration’s making production and distribution a top priority as we head into the spring, and I will work with my fellow MetroWest legislators and the Baker administration to ensure that our communities receive an adequate supply as the Commonwealth receives additional doses. It is also important that we make sure the communities hit hardest by the pandemic are receiving enough vaccine and public health information to allow for the widest possible effectiveness of Massachusetts’ vaccine program.”

We are lacking an adequate number of vaccination sites in the MetroWest region,” said **Representative Kate Hogan of Stow**. “I was pleased to see CVS’ announcement that they are expanding the number of locations that will receive the vaccine in the coming weeks. I am urging the administration to bring as many CVS and Walgreens vaccination sites online as these are the locations that are local and convenient, especially for our seniors. Additionally, as we enter into future vaccination phases, I am calling for a mass vaccination site in the MetroWest to vaccinate as many residents as seamlessly as possible.

"Our seniors deserve a clear, equitable, and accessible process to register and access the COVID-19 vaccine," said **Representative Jack Lewis of Framingham**. "I am grateful to my MetroWest and Central Mass colleagues for joining our collective voices in articulating ongoing concerns and propose alternatives."

“I am deeply concerned by the lack of information and transparency we receive as Legislative partners in regards to pandemic efforts and the rollout of this vaccine,” said **Representative Danielle Gregoire of Marlborough**. “It is critical that we work together to ensure the issues that have already been raised by our residents are addressed, that we have sufficient access to doses, that appointments are available, sites are accessible and we are communicating effectively with those in need.”

The delegation raised concerns about several issues highlighted by constituents, including difficulties with the website, transparency in reporting of vaccine supplies, communication and messaging with the public, lack of regional vaccination sites, transparency in reporting of vaccine supplies, and coordination with municipalities and health care providers.

The delegation expects a formal response from the administration in a timely manner given the urgency of this issue and is looking forward to engaging further with the administration to speed up distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

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The full letter from the MetroWest and Central MA delegations is attached.