

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1007

February 2, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Robert J. Fenton
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Acting Administrator Fenton:

Like many areas of the country, Georgia's 7th Congressional District is reeling from cases of and deaths caused by COVID-19. Under this new administration, the top priority is to get this virus under control and to implement a robust vaccine distribution program for the country. I support that effort and agree that there is no greater task before us than the COVID-19 response.

As you are aware, the Biden administration has tasked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with establishing federally-supported community vaccine centers across the country, with the goal of setting up 100 sites in the next month. I write to you today to respectfully request that your agency prioritize placement of one of these sites in Georgia's 7th Congressional District.

According to the latest state profile report released by the White House, the two counties that make up the congressional district I represent — Gwinnett and Forsyth — both rank among the top 12 counties in the state with new cases of COVID-19. In fact, Gwinnett County ranks at the top of the list. Moreover, my district is home to low-income communities who have been devastated by the pandemic and struggling to access the resources necessary to stabilize their lives and that of their families. I have already raised serious concerns about our teachers and students returning to the classroom without a robust plan to provide a safe teaching and learning environment. The addition of a vaccine distribution center in this district will help us tackle the challenges we face from this virus.

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The 7th Congressional District is one of the most diverse districts in the country, home to many communities of color and immigrant communities that are being underserved by vaccine distribution across the country. Just this week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that Black and Hispanic people are getting vaccinated against coronavirus at much lower rates than white people, despite being disproportionately hit by the pandemic. Over 60 percent of those vaccinated were white, 11.5 percent were Hispanic, 6 percent were Asian, and just over 5 percent were Black. Placing a vaccine distribution center in this area of the country will not only help to move the process of vaccine distribution forward, but will also help address gaps that we are seeing in distributing the vaccine across racial and ethnic communities.

As you develop this plan, I stand ready to assist in any way that I can. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn Bourdeaux".

Carolyn Bourdeaux
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

cc: The Honorable Gracia B. Szczech, Region Administrator for Region 4, FEMA
The Honorable James Stallings, Director, Georgia Emergency Management and
Homeland Security Agency