

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

March 4, 2021

Mr. Robert Fenton, Jr.
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Mr. Norris Cochran
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Acting Administrator Fenton and Acting Secretary Cochran:

We write with regard to contingency planning to address weather disruptions and the vaccine administration effort. The devastating winter storm that impacted several southern states, and its subsequent national effect on vaccine distribution, has shed light on our need for enhanced, proactive emergency planning. During the week of February 15, 2021, the winter storm delayed the delivery of 6 million doses of vaccines nationwide and 209,000 doses to Florida. Within the State of Texas, the storm has led to the cancellation of hundreds of thousands of vaccine appointments.

According to President Biden, the United States will have enough vaccines for all Americans by the end of May. Florida's hurricane season occurs from June until November, a critical time for the administration of vaccines. Should a hurricane, or other severe weather event, occur during that period, it could have grave impacts on Florida's ability to complete its vaccination schedule in a timely manner. With hurricane season, early planning is key, and it is especially critical this year as Floridians are relying on timely access to vaccines.

To that end, we request a response to the following questions:

- What steps are FEMA and HHS taking to develop contingency plans for future, potential weather disruptions?
- Should there be future storms that impact distribution hubs, what steps is the federal government taking to coordinate with shipping companies, and the United States Postal Service, to ensure these delays do not happen again?
- Does FEMA plan to issue hurricane guidance in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to ensure that healthcare providers and vaccine sites in Florida are prepared with contingency plans to both safeguard vaccine doses and remain on schedule with their vaccination plans?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator