



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Tedisco & Jordan Urge Governor to Prioritize “Firefighters and all Frontline Emergency 1st Responders” for COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO December 11, 2020



“Governor: protect our firefighters and all frontline emergency first responders and the people they serve from the coronavirus by ensuring these essential workers are among the first to have access to the COVID-19 vaccine,” that’s the message Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I-Glenville) and Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I-Halfmoon) are sending today in a new letter (attached) to Governor Andrew Cuomo and state Health Commissioner Howard Zucker.

Under the [Governor's current COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan](#), firefighters and some emergency first responders who are often the first on the scene of an emergency to treat sick and injured citizens and those who may be infected with the coronavirus in confined spaces such as the back of an ambulance, may not be able to get vaccinated until Phase 2.

The Governor's current vaccine distribution plan is particularly concerning to volunteer firefighter and ambulance departments that have a small staff. If one first responder in a department comes down with COVID-19 they could force the entire agency to temporarily shut down, endangering whole communities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization and Prevention is recommending that EMS workers be in Phase 1a of vaccine distribution. The National Academy of Sciences in its Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccines also prioritizes these personnel as part of Phase 1a.

Senators Tedisco and Jordan are urging the Governor and Health Commissioner to move-up firefighters and all of New York's emergency first responders to the top tier, Phase 1a of being able to get vaccinated.

"Our dedicated and courageous emergency first responders put their lives on the line every time they respond to a 911 call to enter a burning building or hop in an ambulance and go to an emergency and this pandemic has made their jobs even more stressful and dangerous to them and their colleagues and families. It defies logic why the people we hope and expect will be there as the front-line of care for those who may have COVID-19 are not among the top tier of essential personnel who can receive the vaccine. By protecting all of our emergency first responders from the coronavirus, we will better protect all citizens from the virus," said Senator Jim Tedisco.

“Time and again throughout the COVID pandemic, our heroic first responders have selflessly answered the call to protect and serve our communities and always put the safety and security of their fellow New Yorkers first. Now, it’s time that our state puts our first responders first by ensuring that they are included in Phase 1a of the COVID vaccine rollout. I’m proud to partner with my good friend Senator Jim Tedisco in calling on Governor Cuomo and state Health Commissioner Zucker to make certain that our first responders are part of Phase 1a for New York’s forthcoming COVID vaccine distribution,” said Senator Daphne Jordan.