



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Racing and Wagering
Committee
COMMITTEES
Aging
Children and Families
Local Governments
Tourism, Parks, Arts and
Sports Development

Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building, Second Floor
Albany, NY 12224

Commissioner Mary T. Bassett, M.D., M.P.H
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Governor Hochul and Commissioner Bassett:

We are writing to request that you reconsider the vaccine booster mandate for health care workers. We've all seen the effect the initial vaccine mandate had on our hospitals. Staffing shortages were created that still persist to this day, and by implementing yet another mandate on our health professionals, that shortage will only get worse.

When combating this pandemic, we need to be pragmatic and look at the big picture of care for those affected by COVID-19. At the end of the day, what hospitalized patients need is care, and policies that jeopardize our ability to ensure they receive sufficient and attentive care only stifle our ability to save lives when seconds count.

Mitigating the spread of COVID-19 is certainly an important part of what must be done to bring this pandemic to an end. Our state should provide our health care workers with the ability to undergo regular testing in lieu of receiving their booster shot if they do not wish to receive it. This is a policy that could both preserve hospital staffing levels and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, both of which are of critical importance if we wish to put the worst days of this pandemic behind us. Our hospitals are already facing a significant staffing strain and this booster mandate will only make matters worse. One upstate hospital has reported to see a loss of over five hundred employees should this booster mandate go into effect on the 21st of February.

We sincerely hope you consider implementing this testing alternative for the sake of the health care workers who have worked tirelessly over the last several years to save the lives of our neighbors, as well as those who will be relying on the ability of hospital staff to provide them sufficient care to survive.

Sincerely,



JEFF GALLAHAN
Assemblyman, 131st District

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Assemblyman, 131st District

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Hawley".

Stephen Hawley
Member of Assembly
139th District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Norris".

Mike Norris
Member of Assembly
144th District