



## STATE OF NEW YORK

December 10, 2020

Alex M. Azar II  
Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

We stand together in expressing serious concern with the Trump administration's vaccine distribution plan. While we are encouraged by recent reports regarding the vaccines' efficacy, there is urgent work to be done to ensure vaccination efforts are both expeditious and fair.

Governors need federal funding in order to execute comprehensive distribution plans to guarantee that all communities have access to the vaccine. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials estimates that a comprehensive vaccine distribution program would cost approximately \$8 billion. To date, the Trump Administration has administered a mere \$200 million to the states.

Without adequate funding, distribution will not be equitable. COVID-19 has laid bare chronic health disparities in our country that led communities of color to suffer disproportionately from this virus. Communities of color disproportionately suffer from pre-existing conditions, such as asthma, obesity and hypertension, that compound the harm the virus can cause -- Black Americans died at twice the rate of white Americans due to COVID, and Latinos died at one and a half times the rate of whites. The underlying reality is that communities of color lack access to healthcare institutions and services. But in its current form, the Trump Administration's vaccine plan relies on private health facilities that have historically excluded Black and brown communities. By relying on a flawed, biased system, the administration's approach will only serve to further widen existing disparities in health outcomes.

The essential workers who carried this nation through the worst of this pandemic are predominately people of color. They especially deserve a national vaccine plan designed to ensure they are protected.

Marc Morial, undersigned and the President and CEO of the National Urban League, has said the Trump Administration's plan is, "thoughtless, careless and needs to be taken back to the drawing board." Derrick Johnson, undersigned and President and CEO of the NAACP, has said that, "any introduction of a vaccine plan devoid of the infrastructure we know is effective within the Black community reinforces the same incompetence that has affected far too many communities that have been neglected in the midst of this global pandemic." The Reverend Al Sharpton, undersigned and the President and Founder of National Action Network said, "I've seen this movie before. Many Black Americans live in healthcare deserts, where there are no hospitals or healthcare centers in our area. This has hurt us badly during the COVID crisis. This unfair treatment is about to happen again. I don't see how we will see equal distribution of the vaccine based on the federal plan. That must be fixed immediately."

The Black and brown communities that were first on the list of who died from COVID cannot be last on the list of who receives the vaccine. Our federal government needs to stand up and deliver a world-class vaccination program that quickly and comprehensively reaches underserved communities of color. The private market alone is incapable. We need to enlist faith-based organizations, neighborhood groups and local non-profits with deep roots in Black, brown and poor communities to get this done. And we need the funding to do so.

This pandemic cannot end, and our country will not truly be safe, until everyone has access to a vaccine. The Trump Administration must implement a national vaccine plan that does not leave any community behind, and it must do so now. Time is short. We stand prepared to work with your team and the federal government to execute a vaccination program worthy of these United States.

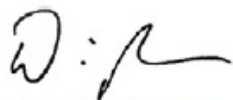
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Cuomo", with a stylized, cursive script.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

cc: President-elect Biden  
New York State Congressional Delegation  
Members of the Congressional Black Caucus

Enc. Additional Supporters



Derrick Johnson  
President & CEO  
NAACP



Marc Morial  
President & CEO  
National Urban League



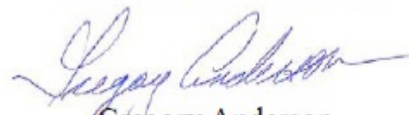
Reverend Al Sharpton  
President & Founder  
National Action Network

**Wilbur Aldridge**

Wilbur Aldridge  
Mid Hudson/Westchester Regional  
Director  
NAACP New York State Conference

**Kevin Alexander**

Kevin W. Alexander  
President & CEO  
Rockaway Development &  
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Founding Pastor  
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**Daniel Barber**

Daniel Barber  
CCOP President  
NYCHA Citywide Council of  
Presidents

**Thomas Beauford, Jr.**


Thomas Beauford, Jr.  
President & CEO  
Buffalo Urban League



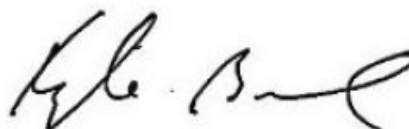
Reverend Dr. A. R. Bernard  
Senior Pastor  
Christian Cultural Center

**Twiggy Billue**

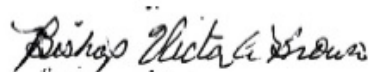
Twiggy Billue  
President  
National Action Network Syracuse  
Chapter



Reverend Mark Blue  
President  
Buffalo Branch NAACP



Kyle Bragg  
President  
32BJ SEIU



Bishop Victor A. Brown  
Senior Pastor  
Mount Sinai United Christian  
Church, Inc.

**Linda Brown-Robinson Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts**

Linda Brown-Robinson  
President  
Syracuse Onondaga NAACP

Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts  
Senior Pastor  
Abyssinian Baptist Church



Joy D. Calloway  
Interim CEO  
Planned Parenthood of Greater New  
York



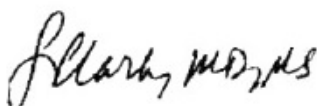
Reverend Dr. Demetrius Carolina  
Pastor & Executive Director  
First Central Baptist Church, The  
Central Family Life Center



Robin Chappelle Golston  
President & CEO  
Planned Parenthood Empire State  
Acts

**Isma Chaudhry**

Dr. Isma H. Chaudhry  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Islamic Center of Long Island



Dr. Linda Clark  
President & Co-Founder  
Black Physicians Network of  
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Claudia Coger  
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**Annie Cotton Morris**

Annie Cotton Morris  
Queens District Chair  
NYCHA



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Senior Pastor  
First Baptist Church of Riverhead



Shirley E. Coverdale  
President & CEO  
Family Community Life Center

**Phil Craig**

Reverend Dr. Phil Craig  
Pastor  
The Greater Springfield  
Community Church



Robert Darby  
President, Bakery Confectionary  
Tobacco Workers & Grain  
Millers Local 36G

**Rev. Troy DeCohen**

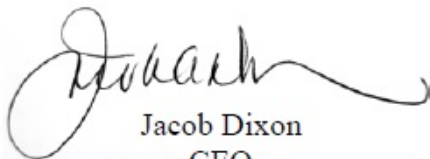
Reverend Troy DeCohen  
President  
United Black Clergy of Westchester

**Walter Dixie**

Walter Dixie  
Executive Director  
Jubilee Homes of Syracuse, Inc.

**Geroge Dixon**

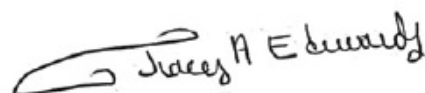
Geroge Dixon  
President  
NAACP Corona East Elmhurst  
Chapter



Jacob Dixon  
CEO  
Choice for All



Hazel Dukes  
President  
NAACP New York State  
Conference



Tracey Edwards  
Long Island Regional Director  
NAACP New York State  
Conference



*Eric Figueroa*

Archbishop Eric Figueroa, Sr.  
Senior Pastor, New Life Tabernacle  
Metropolitan Archbishop of New  
Life Covenant Archdiocese

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Bishop Orlando Findlayter  
Senior Pastor  
New Hope Christian Fellowship

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Reverend Dr. Elaine Flake  
Co-Pastor  
Greater Allen AME Cathedral

*Floyd Flake*

Reverend Dr. Floyd Flake  
Senior Pastor  
Greater Allen AME Cathedral

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Richard Flateau  
Chairperson  
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Gregory Floyd  
President, Teamsters Local 237  
Vice President-At Large,  
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Pastor James Giles  
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Reverend Dr. Johnnie Green  
Senior Pastor  
Mount Neboh Baptist Church

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George Gresham  
President  
1199SEIU United Healthcare  
Workers East

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Elaine Gross  
Founder & President  
ERASE Racism

*Jan Harbin*

Dr. Janice Harbin  
President & CEO  
Anthony Jordan Medical Center

*Lionel Harvey*

Bishop Lionel Harvey  
Senior Pastor/Teacher, First  
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Presiding Bishop, Sword of the  
Spirit Christian Fellowship, Inc.

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Mark Henry  
President  
Amalgamated Transit Local  
#1056

*Nicky Hylton-Patterson*

Nicky Hylton-Patterson  
Executive Director  
Adirondack Diversity Initiative

*Daren C. Jaime*

Reverend Daren C. Jaime  
Pastor  
People's African Methodist  
Episcopal Zion Church

*Larry Jennings, Sr.*

Reverend Larry Jennings, Sr.  
President  
NAACP Huntington Branch

*Berenecea Eanes*

Dr. Berenecea Johnson-Eanes  
President  
York College

*George Max Jones*

Bishop George Max Jones  
Senior Pastor  
Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ,  
Syracuse



Dominique Jones  
Executive Director  
Boys & Girls Club of Harlem



Jennifer Jones Austin  
CEO & Executive Director  
Federation of Protestant Welfare  
Agencies



Hope Knight  
President & CEO  
Greater Jamaica Development  
Corporation



Imam Dr. Tahir Kukiqi  
Vice President  
Albanian Islamic Cultural Center



Reverend Dr. Adolphus Lacey  
Senior Pastor  
Bethany Baptist Church



Maggie Larkins  
Community Leader  
Far Rockaway



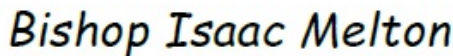
Vira Lynn Jones  
Executive Director  
Bedford Stuyvesant Museum of  
African Art



H. Carl McCall  
Chairman Emeritus  
State University of New York



Wendy McClinton  
President & CEO  
Black Veterans for Social Justice,  
Inc.



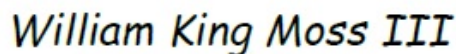
Isaac Melton  
Bishop  
Christian Light Missionary Baptist  
Church of Long Beach



Terrance L. Melvin  
Secretary-Treasurer  
New York State AFL-CIO



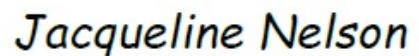
Reverend Greg Merriweather  
Pastor  
Calvary Baptist Church



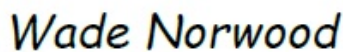
William King Moss III  
President  
NAACP Islip Town Branch



Reverend Dr. Les Mullings  
Senior Pastor  
Community Church of the  
Nazarene, Far Rockaway



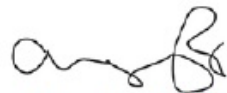
Jacqueline Nelson  
President  
NAACP Rome NY



Wade Norwood  
CEO  
Common Ground Health



Dr. Philip Ozuah  
President & CEO  
Montefiore Medical Center



Angelica Perez-Delgado  
President & CEO  
Ibero American Action League

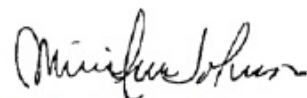




Marques Phillips  
Director of City Initiatives  
City of Utica



Reverend Gilbert Pickett, Sr.  
Senior Pastor, Mount Horeb Baptist  
Church  
Moderator, Eastern Baptist  
Association of New York, Inc.



Mimi Pierre Johnson  
President & CEO  
Elmont Cultural Center



Barbara Powell  
President  
NAACP Hempstead Branch



Dr. Frances E. Pratt  
President  
Nyack Branch NAACP



Candace Prince-Modeste  
President  
NAACP Jamaica Branch



Charles Rangel  
Former Congressman  
New York's 11th Congressional  
District




Jawwaad Rasheed  
President  
Mohawk Valley Frontiers  
International



Arva Rice  
President & CEO  
New York Urban League



Bishop Calvin Rice  
Senior Pastor  
New Jerusalem Worship Center



Rev. Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson  
Senior Pastor  
Grace Baptist Church  
Chairman, National Action Network



Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney  
Chief of Staff & Chief Diversity  
Officer  
Buffalo State, State University of  
New York



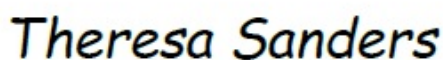
Me'Shae Rolling  
Executive Director  
Upstate Minority Economic  
Alliance



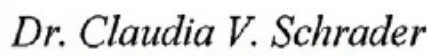
Steven Rubenstein  
Chairman  
Association for a Better New York



Davon Russell  
President  
WHEDCo



Theresa Sanders  
President & CEO  
Urban League of Long Island



Dr. Claudia V. Schrader  
President  
Kingsborough Community College



Clifford Scott  
Executive Director  
Niagara Falls Housing Authority



Larry Scott Blackmon  
New York Association of Chapters  
of Alpha Fraternity, Inc.  
100 Black Men



Iesha Sekou  
CEO & Founder  
Street Corner Resources

*William Simmons*

William Simmons  
Executive Director  
Syracuse Housing Authority

*April Simpson*

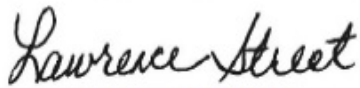
April Simpson  
Former Tenant Association  
President  
Queensbridge Houses



Joanne N. Smith  
President & CEO  
Girls for Gender Equity



Dr. Ty Stone  
President  
Jefferson Community College



Lawrence Street  
President  
NAACP Eastern Long Island  
Branch



Farah Tanis  
Co-Executive Director  
Black Women's BluePrint

*Elgin Taylor*

Reverend Dr. Elgin Joseph Taylor  
Vice President At-Large  
Empire Baptist Missionary  
Convention of NY, Inc.



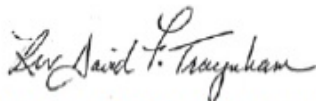
Bishop Mitchell Taylor  
CEO  
Urban Upbound

*William C. Thompson Jr.*

William C. Thompson, Jr.  
Chairman  
CUNY Board of Trustees



Djounedou Titikpina  
President  
African People Alliance, Inc.



Pastor David Traynham  
Chairman & Executive Director  
ALERT Partnership, Inc.

*Stephen D. Tucker*

Steven Tucker  
President & CEO  
Northland Workforce Training  
Center

*Carl Washington, Jr.*

Reverend Dr. Carl Washington, Jr.  
Convention President  
Empire Baptist Missionary  
Convention of NY, Inc.

*Carol Wilkins*

Carol Wilkins  
Resident Association President  
Ravenswood Houses

*Tamika Williams*

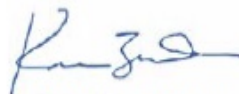
Tamika Williams  
Tenant Association President  
Pomonok Houses

*Abdul-Rahman Yaki*

Imam Abdul-Rahman Yaki  
Islamic Center of the Capital  
District

*Patrick Young*

Reverend Patrick H. Young  
Pastor  
First Baptist Church of Corona



Rahsmia Zatar  
Executive Director  
STRONG Youth