

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 30, 2021

The Honorable Martin Walsh
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20210

Jeff Zients
White House Coronavirus Response
Coordinator
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Secretary Walsh and Mr. Zients,

As the Biden Administration's COVID-19 task force executes its comprehensive national strategy to combat COVID-19, we write to urge you to continue to work with Congress, private companies, states, territories, Indian Tribes, and other jurisdictions to ensure that employees are offered full pay for any time off needed to get vaccinated, and we ask that you respond by identifying any statutory changes necessary to help you meet this goal.

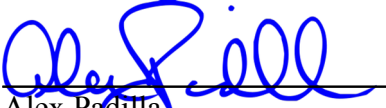
Millions of hourly shift workers are financially unable to take unpaid time off for vaccination and recovery. These workers are disproportionately from low-income, minority, and immigrant communities. According to a recent survey, nearly 20% of workers have not been vaccinated because they are afraid of missing work or are too busy. That proportion increased to 26% for Black workers and 40% for Hispanic workers. In June, the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 65% of workers were encouraged by their employer to get a COVID-19 vaccine, but only 50% received paid time off to get the shot or recover from side effects. Workers in the group that received paid time off were more likely to be vaccinated.

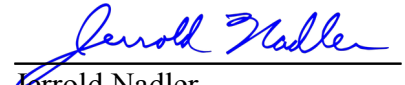
As infections with the Delta variant rise across the country, it is more important than ever for the administration to use its full authority to increase our nation's COVID-19 vaccination rate and put the pandemic behind us. Likewise, it is vital that the federal government continues to support paid leave for working people in this country to get vaccinated and recover from any after-effects of vaccination. While we are grateful that President Biden has called on all employers to provide paid time off for employees to get vaccinated, more must be done.

We urge the Department of Labor (DOL) to identify the parts of federal law for which DOL has enforcement authority, if any, that would provide for time off for a COVID-19 vaccination. In the upcoming Occupational Safety and Health Administration's emergency temporary standard, we ask that you clarify details on the requirement for paid time off to be given for an employee to receive the vaccine and to recover from any side effects. Finally, we ask that you report back on what action from Congress would be necessary to help further these goals.

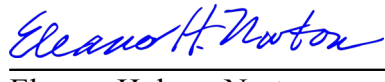
We look forward to working together to combat the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter, and we look forward to your response.

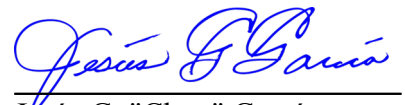
Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

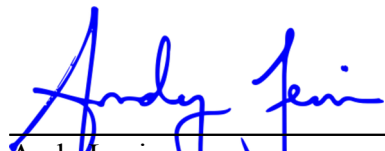

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

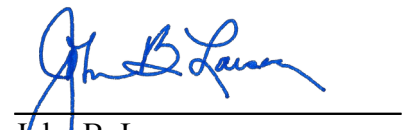

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress
Chair, Committee on
Oversight and Reform



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

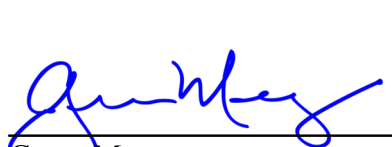

Andy Levin
Member of Congress


John B. Larson
Member of Congress

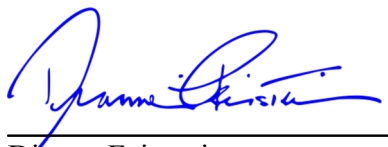

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

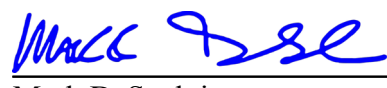

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator




Grace Meng
Member of Congress



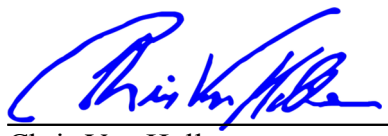
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



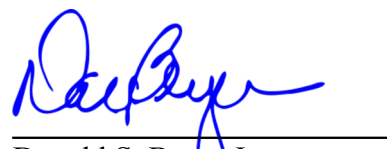
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress




Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress




Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator




Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress




Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator




Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress




Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress




Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress




David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress




Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Kaiuli Kahele
Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator