**[INSERT AGENCY LETTERHEAD]**

**[INSERT DATE]**

The Honorable **[INSERT GOVERNOR’S NAME]**

Governor

**[INSERT MAILING ADDRESS LINE 1]**

**INSERT CITY, STATE ZIP CODE]**

Dear Governor **[INSERT NAME]**:

As a fire and emergency medical services (EMS) leader in our state, I urge you to adopt the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s (NASEM) recommendation to place all fire and EMS personnel in the highest priority tier for receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Fire and EMS personnel serve on the front lines of the battle against COVID-19 while caring for patients and responding to emergencies. It is imperative that our state’s fire and EMS personnel are placed in Priority Tier 1A, alongside other key healthcare providers.

Although fire and EMS personnel do not work in healthcare facilities, they face exposure daily while caring for patients in uncontrolled environments, such as a patient’s home or a moving ambulance, and responding to other 9-1-1 calls. Fire and EMS personnel often respond to emergencies unrelated to whether a caller has COVID-19, such as a car accident or a trip-and-fall, only to later find out that the individual exposed them to the virus. One of the first firefighters to die of COVID-19 contracted it from a homeowner when responding to a gas leak.

Fire departments continue facing unprecedented challenges accessing personal protective equipment (PPE). This lack of PPE has contributed to the deaths of nearly 100 fire and EMS personnel who contracted COVID-19 in the line of duty. Thousands more responders have been quarantined which places immeasurable stress on the individuals, their families, and their fire department which struggles to backfill their position. The danger of exposure is equally serious for single-role EMS personnel, cross-trained fire/EMS personnel, and single-role firefighters. Fire and EMS personnel in New York City were a staggering 15 times more likely than the general public to contract COVID-19 during the first wave of the pandemic.

The NASEM recognized the need to protect all fire and EMS personnel by placing them in Tier 1A for access to the COVID-19 vaccine. While access to PPE is vital, I urge you to adopt the NASEM’s vaccine prioritization recommendations and maintain parity between firefighters, EMS personnel, and in-facility healthcare workers. We must ensure all fire and EMS personnel have priority access to the best protections possible and that includes safe and effective vaccines.

Fire and EMS personnel in our state need your help in the fight against COVID-19. I urge you to include fire and EMS personnel in Priority Tier 1A of our state’s vaccine distribution plan.

Sincerely,

[**INSERT NAME]**

**[INSERT RANK]**

**[INSERT AGENCY NAME}**