

COUNTY OF BRUNSWICK

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The Honorable Roy Cooper

Governor of North Carolina

North Carolina Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Jan. 27, 2021

Dear Governor Cooper,

On behalf of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, I am writing to express our continued commitment to the health of our communities through local, regional, and statewide cooperation as we battle the COVID-19 pandemic together.

In our letter sent to you earlier this month, we expressed our concern that Brunswick County's vaccine providers were not receiving enough vaccine to appropriately meet the demand for a county where one-third of the total population is aged 65 or older.

While there is still uncertainty about how many vaccines the state's providers could receive in the coming weeks due to limited supplies at the federal level, the commissioners and I were encouraged to hear the State acknowledge this week that it will work to provide increased vaccine for counties to account for those with larger populations over 65 years—a qualification that Brunswick County undoubtedly meets.

When our county adopted the most recent changes to North Carolina's vaccination plan on Jan. 15, more than 46,000 of our 143,000 residents immediately became eligible under Group 2's requirements—not including the remaining health care workers eligible under Group 1 who are still trying to get a vaccine. We are optimistic that the recent news from the State will ensure a more equitable distribution of the vaccine to counties with populations significant concentrated under Group 1 and 2's guidelines.



Brunswick County's providers are following several of the State's recommendations to support the timely and efficient delivery of the vaccines it receives. Our health department has done an exceptional job to help coordinate a centralized mass vaccination clinic with our local hospitals and local federally qualified health centers to pool our vaccine and staffing resources to schedule appointments and vaccinate as many eligible people as possible every week.

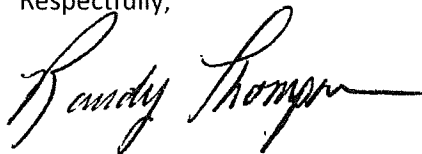
The size and scope of our current drive-thru clinic coupled with our access to a transportable freezer also make it realistic for us to add more appointments and open additional clinics in the event of increased vaccine allocations. Our health and emergency services teams are already working to select potential sites and prepare operational plans in the event we can open more locations to improve clinic accessibility for our residents.

We also recognize that the State must prove that North Carolina can vaccinate residents in a timely and effective manner to support our mutual case for more vaccines. Through Brunswick County's preparations, we stand ready to help the State meet these essential reporting deadlines to ensure the federal government has the evidence it needs to see that North Carolinians are doing their part to vaccinate and slow the spread of COVID-19.

The State's commitment to supporting additional vaccines for counties with higher numbers of underserved or elderly residents is positive news and we appreciate you including this factor in the allocation planning process moving forward. We remain hopeful this news will ensure many of those who are anxiously awaiting their vaccination in the coming weeks will not be turned away at the last moment due to a sudden lack of vaccine.

As we approach the one-year anniversary of our pandemic response, we offer our sincere regards for the continued health of yourself, NCDHHS Secretary Dr. Mandy K. Cohen, and all those who are responding to this terrible disease. We remain open to communicating with you further on ways we can support Brunswick County and North Carolina together through this crisis.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randell (Randy) Thompson

Brunswick County Chairman of the Board
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CC: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D.
U.S. Representative David Rouzer
North Carolina Senator Bill Rabon
North Carolina Representative Frank Iler

North Carolina Representative Charlie Miller

Brunswick County Vice Chairman Mike Forte

Brunswick County Commissioner Marty Cooke

Brunswick County Commissioner Pat Sykes

Brunswick County Commissioner Frank Williams

Brunswick County Municipal Governments and Mayors

Alliance of Brunswick County Property Owners Association