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TIM RYAN
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
13TH DISTRICT, OHIO

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH SUBCOMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN

DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE
ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT, AND
RELATED AGENCIES SUBCOMMITTEE

February 1, 2021

Governor Mike DeWine
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Dear Governor DeWine:

Thank you for your continued leadership during these unprecedented times. As distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine is well underway across our state, I write to urge you to take immediate steps to ensure an equitable distribution of the vaccine to Black communities across the state.

According to the [COVID-19 dashboard](#) tracking the disbursement of vaccines, Black Ohioans make up less than 5% of those who have received a vaccine in Ohio. This is incredibly concerning considering that Black Ohioans have made up 20% of the state's hospitalizations and 12% of deaths. This community has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, and yet they are not being prioritized in Ohio's vaccination plans. This is unacceptable.

I fully support the recommendations put forth by the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation that highlight three vital improvements that must be made to address the systemic problems as Ohio's vaccination efforts continue.

- **Location:** Black communities are often in areas without a grocery store or pharmacy. There must be intentional effort and a plan to meet Black Ohioans where they live.
- **Technology:** There are still those across the state who do not have a computer or internet access. There must be outreach to Black Ohioans to ensure they are able to sign-up for a vaccine appointment.
- **Priorities:** There has been no strategic plan for how to distribute the vaccine to the most disproportionately affected population in our state.

It is vital that changes are made to ensure an equitable distribution of vaccines to Black Ohioans. Putting together a plan for how to correct these systemic problems must be a priority, not an afterthought. I respectfully request you work expeditiously to make these changes.

Sincerely,

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress