December 1, 2020

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Governor, State of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Governor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of the (company/organization), I write you today with an urgent request regarding the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines and the need to make school bus drivers priority-essential employees for the planned phase-in of these vaccinations. We are a (describe your company/organization).

Needless to say, the last nine months have been a challenging environment for everyone, and we look forward to a complete return to the classroom for all students. By far, the most important element in achieving a complete return to the classroom will be to ensure an adequate number of skilled, trained, and licensed school bus drivers.

Statistically, our national organization, the National School Transportation Association (NSTA) estimates that 5-10 percent of industry bus drivers are currently sidelined by COVID-19, and those numbers continue to rise. These include drivers who are infected, exposed and quarantined, and those on a leave of absence. NSTA also estimates that approximately 33 percent of industry drivers are aged 60 or older, and are racially and ethnically diverse group. To summarize, many school bus drivers remain fearful about a return to work without a vaccine, and targeting this group will certainly assist in the prevention of transmissions as well.

On November 23, 2020, NSTA testified before the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), an arm of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), urging that panel to recommend school bus drivers for phase 1 deployment of the COVID-19 vaccine. As mentioned, ACIP only can make recommendations, whereas the deployment of the vaccine will be ultimately be determined by your office.

School bus drivers are included on the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) list of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers. They are listed in both the Education and Transportation sections of the latest version from August 2020. Inclusion of school bus drivers on this list indicates that CISA validates these workers as essential, and we believe this distinction is probative for you to consider too.

Without a healthy and plentiful workforce of drivers - more children may be forced into less safer ways to get to school, and many may not have access to pursue their educational opportunities. We implore you to carefully consider the ramifications to our school children by not including school bus drivers in the priority deployment of this critical vaccine.

I thank you for your prompt consideration of this matter. Please feel free to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, should you require further information.

Sincerely,

Name

Title