

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2020

Judith M. Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A.
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Health
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Commissioner Persichilli:

We write to formally request additional information regarding the State's plan for how to effectively address any current and future COVID-19 outbreaks in our long-term care facilities.

As you know, residents of long-term care facilities are among our State's most vulnerable population at risk of contracting COVID-19. It is critical that we do everything in our power to protect the residents, front-line health care workers, and their families from contracting this deadly virus.

Since the onset of this virus in March, 7,337 residents and staff have died from COVID-19 and there have been outbreaks at 1,068 long-term care facilities in New Jersey. From tragic outbreaks at our State Veterans Homes in Paramus, Menlo Park, and Vineland, to rapidly increasing cases at long-term care facilities in each of our communities, we must remain vigilant against COVID-19 and the threat that it poses to residents and staff.

As we enter the winter months, holiday season, and flu season, our collective vigilance will be more important than ever. Residents and their families deserve to know that a comprehensive plan is in place for protocols to mitigate COVID-19, including isolating positive residents, containing any potential outbreaks, and protecting all staff coming to work every day. We urge you to consider all staff and their work environments, including front-line health care workers, administrators, custodial workers, and kitchen staff. Additionally, the loved ones of these residents and staff deserve transparency, regular communication, assurances that personal protective equipment (PPE) is stockpiled, and the peace of mind that a plan is in place and protocols are being followed.

We appreciate your leadership and commitment to public health at this most difficult time. We stand ready to assist in any way that we can to ensure that residents, staff, and their families receive the utmost respect and highest quality of care.

Sincerely,



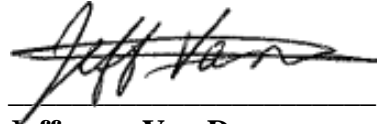
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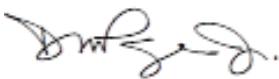
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