



December 10, 2020

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices:

On behalf of hundreds of thousands of essential workers in public transit and rail transportation, we are writing to urge you to prioritize these workers for access to a COVID vaccine as soon as possible. Your recommendations for vaccine allocation are made based on science, implementation realities, and ethics – all of which indicate that these frontline workers should be a high priority as the vaccine becomes available over the next few months.

As you are aware, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has designated many transit and rail workers as essential to maintaining our nation's critical infrastructure. These workers have suffered on the frontlines of the fight against this virus – transporting healthcare workers and sick travelers to hospitals, clinics, and test sites every day since the start of the national emergency. Bus drivers, paratransit operators, Amtrak service workers, and others must regularly be in close, physical contact with passengers in order to perform their jobs. They are at a high level of exposure to the virus.

These workers are also performing jobs that are necessary for successful distribution of the vaccine to others. In cities across the country, people will take a bus or a train to get their vaccination. Administering doctors and nurses will commute to work on these services. Without a healthy, robust transportation sector, our country cannot hope to effectively implement any vaccination strategy.

We ask that you recognize these concerns by prioritizing frontline transit and rail workers in the next phase of vaccine allocation (Phase 1b) in your upcoming recommendations to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Thank you for your work to ensure that our country escapes from this pandemic as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
SMART – Transportation Division
Transport Workers Union of America