

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

August 16, 2021

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Criswell:

As the Delta variant continues to spread throughout the United States, causing a surge in COVID-19 cases and related hospitalizations across the country, we want to first thank you for the tireless work of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in response. We write to draw your attention to a letter sent by Oregon Governor Kate Brown on August 13, 2021, requesting FEMA medical personnel to aid in the state's response to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. We urge you to give swift and full consideration to Governor Brown's request.

In our home state of Oregon, even though 71.9 percent of adult Oregonians are vaccinated and the state has had relatively low levels of infection during the pandemic, communities with low-vaccination rates are experiencing extremely high rates of COVID-19 infection. This is causing hospitalizations to spike statewide, straining overall hospital workforce capacity.

As a result, the state hospital and health care systems are facing an acute staffing need. State officials estimate that the current surge in cases is likely to exceed hospital capacity by 400-500 beds in a matter of weeks. The state has subsequently tightened mitigation measures, like indoor-masking, and has asked the National Guard to provide support to hospital staff in heavily impacted areas. In addition to these efforts, Governor Brown is requesting FEMA provide additional personnel to ensure Oregonians get the care that they need during this critical time.

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Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your work combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz  
Member of Congress