

# United States Senate

March 30, 2021

Mr. Robert Fenton  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Federal Center Plaza  
500 C St, SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Acting Administrator Fenton:

We understand that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) plans to cease operations at both of California's Federal Pilot Community Vaccination Centers on April 11, but that state and local officials are trying to find ways to keep them open. We write to request that FEMA work closely with them to ensure these critical sites can continue to administer vaccinations and combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, we ask that you provide the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles with financial and logistical support so they can take over operations, and that the federal government continues to send the sites direct shipments of vaccine doses.

While we understand that some federal mass vaccination sites may have been more effective than others, the Oakland Coliseum and California State University, Los Angeles, sites are essential parts of California's vaccine distribution efforts. According to CalOES, both centers regularly administer more than 7,500 doses a day—well above the initial projection of 6,000—which significantly bolsters regional capacity. The Oakland site, for example, administers 10,000 more doses per week than the rest of Alameda County combined. In total, and in fewer than six weeks, the two sites have distributed over half a million doses, with about 67% going to underserved communities and people of color. These sites are succeeding in reducing racial disparities in distribution and in reaching residents who might not otherwise have access to a vaccine.

Furthermore, California intends to make all residents age 16 and older eligible for a vaccine next month. With this large expansion imminent – combined with highly transmissible variants spreading quickly across counties, the economy reopening, and spring break travel upon us – we believe this is precisely the time when mass vaccination sites, like the ones in Oakland and Los Angeles, are needed. It would be counterproductive to close them before the vast majority of the population is vaccinated.

Although FEMA management of these sites may be coming to an end, the federal government must ensure that state and local governments have the support they need to step in and continue operating them. We appreciate your attention to this matter and stand ready to help however we can.

Sincerely,

  
Alex Padilla  
United States Senator

  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator