

United States Senate

July 29, 2022

Dear Secretary Becerra,

We write to express our increasing concern about the monkeypox outbreak in California, and we urge you to fulfill California's request for additional vaccines to be surged to the state as quickly as possible, as expressed in the attached letter from California Health and Human Services Secretary Mark Ghaly and Dr. Tomás Aragón of the California Department of Public Health.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, California has documented 799 probable and confirmed cases of monkeypox, making the outbreak in California the second largest in the United States after New York. Additionally, the outbreak has been concentrated in Los Angeles and San Francisco and has disproportionately affected members of the LGBTQ+ community. California conservatively estimates that between 250,000 to 350,000 individuals in California are considered to be at high-risk of contracting the virus.

Due to limited supplies, only Californians with suspected or confirmed monkeypox exposure are currently eligible for vaccination, and testing has been limited to individuals with a rash. As we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, a sustained period of limited testing and vaccine availability early in a public health crisis is a recipe for disaster. In the case of monkeypox, it is also largely avoidable, given the availability of an approved vaccine.

Therefore, we urge you to fulfill California's request to surge 600,000 – 800,000 vaccine doses to California as quickly as possible in order to halt the transmission of monkeypox, particularly in those communities that have already been disproportionately impacted.

Thank you for your attention to our request, and we look forward to working with you to stop the spread of monkeypox in California as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Enclosure: Letter to Director Walensky dated July 19, 2022

CC: Director Rochelle Walensky, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention