



STATE OF NEW YORK

January 18, 2021

Albert Bourla, DVM, Ph.D.  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Pfizer  
235 East 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Dr. Bourla:

On behalf of all New Yorkers, I want to thank you and the teams at Pfizer and BioNTech for your hard work to develop a safe, effective vaccine for COVID-19. The last ten months have been exceptionally dark – but your efforts have provided a bright light at the end of the tunnel and hope for a better future. It is abundantly clear that these vaccines are the weapons that will finally win the war against COVID-19. But with hospitalizations and deaths increasing across the country this winter, we are in a footrace with the virus, and we will lose unless we dramatically increase the number of doses getting to New Yorkers. After myself and seven other governors called on the Trump Administration to release more doses, HHS Secretary Alex Azar said that relief was on the way. To date, however, the federal government has not acted on that promise – in fact, New York will receive just 250,000 doses this week, 50,000 fewer than the week prior.

Because you are not bound by commitments that Moderna made as part of Operation Warp Speed, I am requesting that the State of New York be permitted to directly purchase doses from you. The distribution of any doses obtained directly from Pfizer will follow the rigorous guidance the State has established, while enabling us to fill the dosage gap created this week by the outgoing federal administration. All of this will further our goal to vaccinate 70 to 90 percent of New Yorkers as soon as possible and reach herd immunity.

You no doubt understand the challenges New York and other states face. Shifting guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention drove the number of New Yorkers eligible and prioritized for the vaccine from 5 million to 7 million practically overnight. The federal administration essentially opened up a floodgate while cutting our supply – leading to confusion, frustration, and dashed hopes.

Pfizer is a New York company – something I am greatly proud of. The company’s decision to opt out of Operation Warp Speed, which the Biden administration plans to overhaul, puts it in a unique situation that could help us save lives right here in New York. I am happy to discuss this matter further with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Cuomo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

*Governor Andrew M. Cuomo*