

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 3, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,


We respectfully request for you to invoke your authorities granted under the *Defense Production Act of 1950* (P.L. 81-774, 50 U.S.C. §§ 4501 et seq.) to increase the production of vaccines that target the monkeypox virus to halt the spread of a disease representing a public health emergency of international concern.


As of today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is reporting 6,326 known cases of monkeypox in the U.S., but we know there are more that are uncounted. We also know that the West African type of monkeypox is currently dominant in the U.S. and demonstrates a very low fatality rate but we need to be better prepared. COVID taught us that different variants demonstrate different behavior; some spread more easily and can depend on the mode of transmission and underlying immunity that can impact the severity of symptoms experienced. COVID vaccines demonstrated their effectiveness in curbing the deadly effects of a pandemic. The World Health Organization indicates that monkeypox is currently endemic in 10 countries and the other type of monkeypox, Congo Basin type, has a nearly 10% fatality rate. The threat of the monkeypox virus and its spread demands greater attention. We urge you to act on the hard-earned lessons from COVID and invoke the *Defense Production Act* to increase the accessibility of testing and vaccines to Americans.

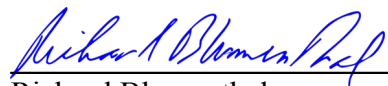
Under the *Defense Production Act*, the President is given a broad set of authorities to assist domestic industry with solving critical national issues like the current shortage of vaccines effective against monkeypox. Under Title I of the *Defense Production Act*, you have the authority to require persons, businesses, and corporations to prioritize and accept contracts for vaccine production under both emergency and non-emergency conditions. Title III also allows you to direct the expansion of productive capacity and supply of vaccines by incentivizing the domestic industrial base when a critical shortage exists; while Title VII grants you the authority to establish voluntary agreements with private industry that could allow for the coordination of vaccine production. These authorities have been employed numerous times since the 1950s to supplement national stockpiles.


Thank you for all that you and your Administration have done thus far to bring awareness to monkeypox's mounting threat to public health and our economy. We look forward to working with you and the Administration to address this urgent problem.

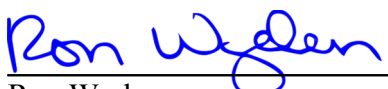
Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

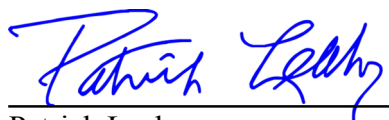

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



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United States Senator


Bernard Sanders
United States Senator


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator


Patrick Leahy
United States Senator


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary of Defense
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services