



November 30, 2020

Dr. Robert Redfield, Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
1600 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Redfield:

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) urges the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to prioritize the solid waste and recycling sector to receive the COVID-19 vaccines immediately after health care workers. The solid waste and recycling sector is comprised of companies and municipal agencies that collectively employ hundreds of thousands of men and women who collect, process, and dispose of municipal solid waste in the United States. The sector was identified in March 2020 as essential by the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Administration (CISA), and also has been listed as essential in every emergency order issued at the state level in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A substantial portion of the employees in the solid waste and recycling sector are persons of color which have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These essential workers are often unable to socially distance because of the work they perform (e.g., multiple employees frequently ride in a solid waste or recycling collection truck; sorters at recycling facilities).

The importance of the solid waste and recycling sector during the pandemic was underscored by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in June, when he recognized both SWANA and America's waste management professionals for their "tireless work throughout the ongoing public health crisis." A copy of Governor Hogan's letter is attached. This essential public service has been performed daily during the pandemic for the past nine months, and continues every day, as residents and businesses generate large amounts of solid waste and recyclables that need to be collected, processed, and properly managed.

A similar request was made in a November 24 letter to the CDC by the National Waste & Recycling Association (NW&RA). Although NWRA represents some of the companies involved in providing solid waste and recycling services, SWANA is the professional association that represents nearly 11,000 individuals employed at both municipal sanitation departments and private companies throughout the United States. Our members, who are located in the field, facilities, and offices in all fifty states, are ensuring that the critical work of solid waste management, including collection, processing, and disposal, is completed properly every day, and the entire sector needs to be prioritized for the vaccine.



Thank you for your attention to this letter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (240) 494-2254 or dbiderman@swana.org.

Sincerely,

David Biderman

David Biderman
Executive Director & CEO

Cc: ACIP Chair Dr. Jose Romero
Governor Larry Hogan
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell