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December 8, 2020

**The Honorable Brian Kemp
Governor of Georgia
Office of the Governor
206 Washington St.
111 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334**

SENT VIA EMAIL TO BERT BRANTLEY

**RE: Petition that Georgia Dentists and Dental Professionals Be Included as Priority
Healthcare Workers in Georgia's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan**

Dear Governor Kemp:

On behalf of over 3,600 member dentists in the state of Georgia, the Georgia Dental Association (“GDA”) would like to express its sincerest gratitude for your support of the dentists of this state as you continue to lead Georgia through the COVID-19 pandemic. As your administration embarks upon its efforts to coordinate Georgia’s COVID-19 Vaccine (the “Vaccine”) Distribution Plan, the GDA respectfully asks that dentists and dental professionals be included as priority healthcare workers so that they will be eligible to receive the Vaccine when it becomes available.

We fully understand and agree that protecting front-line hospital/ER workers, staff/residents of long-term care facilities, and medically fragile and elderly patients is critical when initial supplies of the Vaccine are limited. During the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic and throughout this year, Georgia dental practices have worked tirelessly to ensure they adhere to current infection control protocols and guidelines. While all Georgia dentists and their staff will continue to treat their patients as safely as possible, providing them with priority access to the Vaccine, given the aerosol-generating nature of most dental procedures, will also be essential so that ERs and hospitals are not flooded with dental emergencies.

Please know that your efforts in helping dentists and their staff return to their full scope of practice with limited interruption have not gone unnoticed by the dental professionals in this state. We are especially appreciative of your support of legislation granting limited civil immunity for healthcare providers and small businesses to protect them against possible COVID-19 related transmission claims.

In conclusion, the GDA respectfully asks that your administration continue to designate dentistry as essential healthcare so that dentists and dental professionals will have priority access to the Vaccine.

If the GDA can be of any assistance to you and your administration, please contact the GDA's Executive Director, Frank J. Capaldo [Email: frank@gadental.org; Cell: (678) 428-0096], or the GDA's General Counsel and VP of Government Affairs, Scott Lofranco [email: scott@gadental.org; cell: (540) 529-3953].

Thank you again for your attention to our petition. We look forward to continuing to work with you during this unprecedented time for our state and country and doing our part as healthcare providers to continue to treat the citizens of Georgia.

Respectfully,

Frank J. Capaldo,
GDA Executive Director/CEO

Annette Rainge, DMD
GDA President

cc:

Trey Kilpatrick, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
David Dove, Executive Counsel, Office of the Governor
Bert Brantley, Deputy Chief of Staff - External Affairs, Office of the Governor
Kathleen Toomey, MD, Commissioner, Georgia Dept of Public Health
Megan Andrews, Director of Government Relations, Georgia Dept of Public Health
Emily Jones, Senior Public Health Advisor, Georgia Dept of Public Health
State Representative Lee Hawkins
State Senator Lester Jackson, III
GDA Board of Trustees and House of Delegates
Mo Thrash, Thrash-Haliburton
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