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# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0913

February 21, 2021

The Honorable Monty Wilkinson, Acting Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

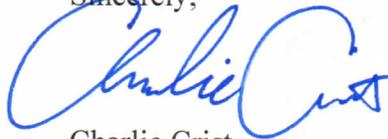
Dear Acting Attorney General Wilkinson,

I write with concern about reports that Florida Governor Ron DeSantis is establishing coronavirus vaccine distribution and administration sites in select locations to benefit political allies and donors, over the needs of higher risk communities and existing county waitlists.

As reported by multiple news outlets<sup>1</sup>, the Governor is setting up "pop-up" vaccination sites to deliver doses to select communities. In several cases, these sites seem to be targeted to wealthy communities with whom Governor DeSantis has clear political connections, allowing some to skip to the front of the line in counties with existing waitlists<sup>2</sup>. For example, on February 17<sup>th</sup>, Governor DeSantis made a surprise announcement that 3,000 new vaccine doses would be made available to the wealthy enclave of Lakewood Ranch in Manatee County. Lakewood Ranch's parent company is owned by one of the largest Republican donors in the country, including contributing over \$900,000 to the Governor. The ZIP codes in question have the highest income levels and lowest COVID infection rates in the county.

Defeating the COVID-19 pandemic must be our top priority. Given the enormous latitude Governors have over vaccine distribution, it would be unconscionable for political corruption to trump both fairness and the best medical guidance. These are literally life and death decisions. While I am anxious for every Floridian, in every community, to get the vaccine as soon as possible, it should be done based on fairness, not political connection. As a former Governor and Attorney General, these issues of equity and fairness matter deeply to me. I request that the Department of Justice determine if the Governor's blatantly political vaccine distribution decisions, which do not seem to be in the public's best interest, violate federal law and merit a full federal investigation.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist  
UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN

<sup>1</sup> Steven Lemongello and Richard Tribou. "DeSantis defends his choice of wealthy senior community for pop-up vaccine site." *Orlando Sentinel*. February 18, 2021. <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/politics/os-ne-desantis-covid-press-conference-20210217-pbr7hmkudfbpfbzor3vwhhpvy-story.html>

<sup>2</sup> Ryan Callihan and Jessica De Leon. "Well-off Manatee residents get special vaccine access, courtesy of DeSantis." *Tampa Bay Times*. February 17, 2021. <https://www.tampabay.com/news/florida-politics/2021/02/17/well-off-manatee-residents-get-special-vaccine-access-courtesy-of-desantis/>