

RESOLUTION

NO: 2021-02-029

LIVINGSTON COUNTY

DATE: February 22, 2021

Resolution Calling Upon the Governor and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to Retract their SVI Social Factor Based Plan and Replace it with a Scientific Medical Factor Based Plan that Results in a Pro-Rata Uniform Distribution to Michigan’s Most Medically Vulnerable Population

- WHEREAS,** the 2020-2021 Covid-19 Pandemic and the State of Michigan’s handling of said pandemic remain cause for serious concern for Livingston County residents; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Michigan is responsible for distributing the limited supply of Covid-19 vaccine; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Michigan has failed or refused to perform its constitutional obligation to distribute the limited amount of vaccines efficiently, fairly, and uniformly; and
- WHEREAS,** Livingston County is home to approximately 188,482 residents, approximately 41,000 of whom are eligible to receive Covid-19 vaccinations under the terms of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) current priority phase, and at least 18,300 eligible persons over 65 years of age have expressed an interest in receiving vaccinations according to the vaccine interest survey on the Livingston County web page; and
- WHEREAS,** the State has only allocated 6,300 vaccine doses for first dose administration to the Livingston County Health Department – a grossly disproportionate amount as compared to other counties and based on the size of the vaccine eligible population; and
- WHEREAS,** it is generally accepted, based on the commentary from the CDC and the State of Michigan, the population most vulnerable to Covid-19 are those 65 years of age and older; and
- WHEREAS,** the CDC has specifically said that “We do know that older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like obesity, diabetes, or heart or lung disease are at higher risk for developing more serious complications when they have COVID-19”; and
- WHEREAS,** for nearly one year, the State of Michigan experts have emphasized repeatedly to Michigan residents that Covid-19 is especially deadly for seniors, especially for those with underlying conditions; and
- WHEREAS,** based on the best available health information, we understand that compared to young, healthy individuals, 65-74 year olds have an increase in the relative risk of death of 90-times, 75-84 year olds have an increase in the relative risk of death of 220-times, and individuals 85 years old and older have an increase in the relative risk of death of 630-times. Additionally, we are informed that comorbidities also play a role in an increased risk compared to young, healthy individuals, ranging broadly from a 2- to 3-fold increase in relative risk of hospitalization. We also understand that race and ethnicity play a role in increasing risk compared to young, healthy, non-minority groups, with estimates of a relative risk of increase in hospitalization of 4-fold and an increase in the relative risk of death of 3-fold; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Michigan’s Plan for the distribution of Covid-19 vaccine was not updated until January 31, 2021, more than one month after distribution of the vaccine began; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Michigan has chosen for unknown reasons to use an algorithm based upon social factors versus medically established risk factors as the basis on which to allocate vaccine to Michigan counties, and the Michigan experts selected the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) as a means to prioritize vaccine shipments to counties; and

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- WHEREAS,** the SVI Algorithm calculates a value, from 0 to 1, based upon 15 Social Factors rather than medical factors, with a lower value resulting in a county receiving less vaccine, while a higher value results in a county receiving more vaccine, and as a direct result of the application of this selected formula, Livingston County has been assessed as having the lowest priority of all 83 Michigan counties; and
- WHEREAS,** had the State of Michigan elected to fairly and objectively and uniformly distribute vaccine based on a county's population of its most at risk—e.g. its senior citizens—Livingston County should be prioritized as the 11th highest, rather than the lowest or 83rd; and
- WHEREAS,** a review of the State's Plan reveals that it has the direct impact of depriving Livingston County's most vulnerable citizens of their right to a fair share of vaccine because rather than allocating vaccine based upon demonstrated and accepted medical factors, State of Michigan experts primarily rely on social factors to allocate vaccine to counties; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Michigan's Plan specifically identifies the importance of vaccinating persons who, by way of example, are incarcerated and non-citizens, when these factors present little, if any, cause for Covid-19 risk or connection to protecting Michigan's and Livingston County's most vulnerable population; and
- WHEREAS,** this SVI or social factor approach was not used by the State of Michigan when dealing with the H1N1 Pandemic, when it, instead, relied upon medical factors such as age and pregnancy which directly correlated with the vulnerable population for that disease; and
- WHEREAS,** citizens desiring more information regarding this disparate treatment of Livingston County Residents are encouraged to read the attached report titled, "COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation: Social Equity vs. Vaccine Fairness."
- NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** the Livingston County Commission calls upon the Michigan Governor and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to rescind their SVI Social Factor Based Plan and replace it with a scientific medical factor based plan that results in a pro-rata uniform distribution to Michigan's most medically vulnerable population; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** the Livingston County Commission rejects any advice or opinion, expert or otherwise, from the State of Michigan that may be used to justify the selection of the SVI Social Factor Based Plan over a scientific medical factor based plan that fairly and uniformly addresses the needs of all of Michigan's most medically vulnerable population regardless of which county they reside in; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** we urge citizens to call, email, text, write, and otherwise correspond with the Governor's Office, the office of our state representatives, the office of our state senator, and the office of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to voice their rightful concerns with the fundamental inequities of the SVI Social Factor Plan and how it unfairly ignores the needs of the most medically vulnerable population in our County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution and the attached Report be transmitted to Governor Whitmer, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Representative Bezotte, Representative Bollin, Senator Theis, both United States Senators, all Michigan Members of Congress, the Speaker of the State House of Representatives and the Majority Leader of the State Senate, the Michigan Association of Counties and all Counties within Michigan, along with the Michigan Township Association and all Townships, Cities and Villages within Livingston County, Michigan.

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