(date)

Dear (state health department/county health department),

I/we write to urge you to consider prioritizing cancer patients in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines because of the compelling data that shows worse COVID-19 outcomes for people in active treatment for, or with a history of, cancer**.** Strategies and decisions regarding vaccine distribution should be developed in a transparent and ethical way by public health professionals free from bias based on political or commercial interests.

(personalize with your name and credentials or society description)

While evidence is still emerging about the nature and severity of illness caused by this novel virus, there have been numerous studies examining the risk of severe COVID-19 disease or death from COVID-19 infection in individuals with a history of canceri ii. One meta-analysisiii reported that individuals with a history of cancer had 1.35-times higher odds of COVID-related death compared to individuals without cancer (OR=1.35, 95% CI 1.17-1.55) and another meta-analysisiv reported 2.31-times higher risk of death in those with a cancer history (95% CI 1.80-2.91).

Mounting evidence also demonstrates that individuals with any history of cancer are at a higher risk of severe disease compared to the general population. In a recent retrospective analysis of patients in Massachusetts, those with a history of cancer were twice as likely to develop severe COVID-19 disease compared to the general population.v

I/we urge you to frequently review the emerging evidence about the impact of COVID-19 on people with cancer and to place these patients in the appropriate tier of allocation based on their risk. This is an unprecedented and challenging time and I/we appreciate your consideration of this request in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations. Thank you for all your work over the last year to keep (state/locality residents) safe during the public health emergency.

Sincerely,

i Izcovich, A., et al., *Prognostic factors for severity and mortality in patients infected with COVID-19: A systematic review.* PLOS ONE, 2020. **15**(11): p. e0241955.

ii Noor, F.M. and M.M.J.J.o.c.h. Islam, *Prevalence and Associated Risk Factors of Mortality Among COVID-19 Patients: A Meta-Analysis.* 2020. **45**(6): p. 1270-1282.

iii Izcovich, A., et al., *Prognostic factors for severity and mortality in patients infected with COVID-19: A systematic review.* PLOS ONE, 2020. **15**(11): p. e0241955.

iv Noor, F.M. and M.M.J.J.o.c.h. Islam, *Prevalence and Associated Risk Factors of Mortality Among COVID-19 Patients: A Meta-Analysis.* 2020. **45**(6): p. 1270-1282.

v *Ganatra, S., et al., Outcomes of COVID-19 in Patients With a History of Cancer and Comorbid Cardiovascular Disease. J Natl Compr Canc Netw, 2020: p. 1-10.*