



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
COMMISSIONER NICOLE "NIKKI" FRIED
THE CAPITOL

July 27, 2022

Dawn O'Connell
Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Assistant Secretary O'Connell,

As Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and an independently-elected member of the Florida Cabinet, I am writing to request additional vaccines and resources from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to address the growing number of monkeypox cases in Florida to prevent further spread. The mobilization of resources by HHS has been critical to the distribution and acquisition of vaccines and testing, however, further allocations are needed to protect high-risk individuals across our state. As of July 26, the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) reported 332 cases across 17 counties, with 247 cases identified in Broward and Miami-Dade counties alone. Florida is now responsible for almost 10 percent of all U.S. cases and is experiencing an increase in new cases, with 245 confirmed cases in July – a rapid increase from the 27 cases confirmed in June.

Floridians are grateful for the 25,000 vaccines already distributed by the federal government to the state, but given the troubling spread of cases in South Florida specifically, I urge you to expedite the FDOH's recent request for additional vaccines under your case-burden allocation strategy. Testing, while greatly improved due to efforts by HHS, is still not widely accessible to many Floridians and continues to limit the state's ability to identify outbreaks and protect vulnerable populations, making vaccines all the more important. My department stands ready to provide assistance during this global health emergency, including amplifying federal awareness efforts to the people of Florida.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "nicole fried".

Nicole Fried
Commissioner of Agriculture