September XX, 2020

Honorable Rachel May
New York State Senate

Honorable Angelo Santabarbara

New York State Assembly

Dear Senator May and Member Santabarbara,

New York State’s highly vulnerable rural counties are far less likely to overcome a COVID-19 outbreak due to a number of socio-economic, health, and structural factors. When an effective countermeasure is developed it is important that it be made available to vulnerable populations all over the state.

We support the concept behind S. 8717 (Kennedy) and A. 10850 (Solages) and respectfully request that you introduce a couple of amendments to the language in the bills.

Is the term ‘medical countermeasure’ defined somewhere else in the law?

**Section 1. (a) The New York State Department of Health, shall develop and release to the public a plan for the equitable distribution of a COVID-19 medical countermeasure to residents of the state.**

1. *The plan will include Local Health Departments as full partners in the design of COVID-19 vaccination distribution within their communities*

**(b) Such plan shall be released within ~~sixty~~** *thirty* **days following approval of such a countermeasure by the United States Food and Drug Administration.**

**(c)(i) rates of infection, severity of illness, hospital capacity, recovery and mortality of patients in a community, with sensitivity to population characteristics, including but not limited to, age, gender, racial and/or ethnic background,** *rurality* **and income status of the members of the community, to the extent that such factors instrumentally affect the rates of infection, severity of illness, hospital capacity, recovery and/or mortality during the current COVID-19 pandemic;**

*(c)(iii) at risk essential workers, including healthcare providers*

If you have any questions, or if there is anything we can do to support your initiatives, please contact Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director, NYSACHO at 518-456-7905 x 108 or sarah@nysacho.org or Sara Wall Bollinger, NYSARH at 315-447-7937 or sara@nysarh.org.

Thank you,

Helen Evans, President Kevin Watkins, President Susan Franko, President

NYSARH NYSACHO NYSPHA