

Sailors' Union of the Pacific



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February 14, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
State of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814.

Re: Merchant Mariner Vaccinations

Dear Governor Newsom,

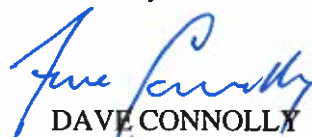
On behalf of merchant mariners living and working in California ports, I request again your intervention to order their immediate access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Mariners are exposed every day on the dangerous frontlines, moving ships and cargo to deliver things like food, energy, and medical supplies so fundamental to health of California and the nation.

Federal authorities would not argue with such action. Many agency experts recognized the early priority of merchant mariners due the logistical keystone nature of their work. As two members of the Federal Maritime Commission recently advised President Biden “Our society has adapted to dramatic changes...” but “what remains unchanged is the essential need of cargo to move through our ports. The sacrifices, resilience, and selflessness of those who work in the maritime industry have kept our supply chain functioning and our economy connected” and will serve as a foundation for the 2021 recovery. “For this to happen, we must provide immediate vaccination to the maritime workforce,” so said Carl Bentzel and Daniel Maffei.

Mariners are easily identified by merchant mariner credential, accustomed to inoculations and vaccinating them would cost little in effort or vaccine. And since their importance far outweighs their numbers a profound and immediate impact on the public safety would result.

We faithfully await our turn despite our heightened risks, but you have the authority to make an immediate and vast improvement not only to the safety of mariners but the entire supply chain they service. We were encouraged that longshoremen were recently re-prioritized in southern California. Remember that the maritime workforce does not stop on the docks but also travels on the waters. We standby to assist in vaccine program promulgation and its practical implementation, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



DAVE CONNOLLY
President/Secretary-Treasurer