

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 22, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Ave NW,  
Washington, DC 20016

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW.  
Washington DC 20024

Secretary Austin, Secretary Becerra, Secretary Mayorkas, and FEMA Administrator Criswell:

On September 9, 2021, President Biden announced a new COVID-19 action plan, responding to the Delta variant surge. The President's action plan includes increasing clinical staff support for COVID-burdened hospitals. I request that you immediately expedite implementation of President Biden's plan in order to make Department of Defense medical teams available to the State of Georgia, where hospitals face severe staffing shortages.

The President's September 9<sup>th</sup> action plan includes "additional support for hospitals facing capacity issues." It states, "The Department of Defense is announcing a commitment to double the number of DOD teams of clinicians deployed to support hospitals battling a surge in COVID-19 cases. These clinicians will be available for mission assignment through FEMA's response across surge states."

I am in frequent contact with leaders at Georgia hospitals who report severe staffing shortages, especially among nurses, as our state continues to battle the Delta variant of COVID-19.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING,  
AND URBAN AFFAIRS

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COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

CHAIR, PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON INVESTIGATIONS

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I therefore urge expedited implementation of the President's plan to make more medical teams available to the states and request an immediate estimate of when that additional clinical support will be available.

I am grateful for your continued efforts to fight COVID-19 and save Americans from severe illness. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Ossoff", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon Ossoff  
United States Senator