



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

11 September 2021

**THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE INTER-AGENCY
TASK FORCE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EMERGING
INFECTIOUS DISEASES (IATF)**

San Lazaro Compound, Tayuman, Sta. Cruz
Manila

THRU: **SEC. FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III**
Secretary, Department of Health
Chairperson, IATF

RE: **Request to administer COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to frontline
healthcare workers and the immunocompromised**

Dear **Secretary Duque**:

Thank you for your reply dated 27 August 2021 which we received on 03 September 2021.

With due respect, there is enough evidence showing definitive clinical value of booster shots. Various studies abroad confirm that the protection the vaccines provide wanes overtime, and that booster shots considerably increase that level of protection. In fact, a number of countries have started or planned to start giving booster shots not only to the healthcare workers and the immunocompromised but to the general population as well.

During a Laging Handa public briefing, DOH Usec. Maria Rosario S. Vergeire said that the Vaccine Experts Panel (VEP) of the DOH has “verbalized that booster shots can be administered to medical workers and immunocompromised individuals.” We urge the DOH and the IATF to give this recommendation the importance and urgency it deserves.

We reiterate the importance of providing vaccine booster doses to our frontline healthcare workers in view of their role in maintaining critical health infrastructure operations and their increased risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to others. With hundreds of hospitals in the country nearing full capacity and our healthcare workers having to attend to more patients and extending working hours as a result of recent rise in positive cases, we cannot afford a further shortage of our health manpower due to infection, or resignation because they feel neglected, especially if the situation could largely be prevented.

We also reiterate our call to provide additional doses to those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised and thus especially vulnerable to COVID-19. They are more at risk of serious, prolonged illness, thereby necessitating hospitalization.

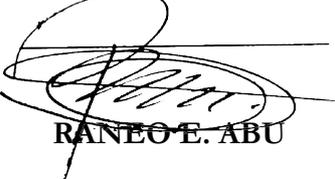
All told, we really need to provide an added layer of protection against COVID-19 to our healthcare workers and the immunocompromised especially as we deal with newer and more infectious variants of the virus.

Thank you for your attention.

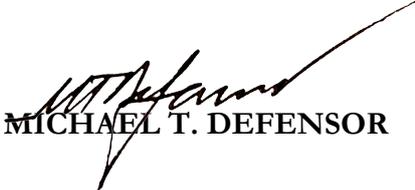
Sincerely,

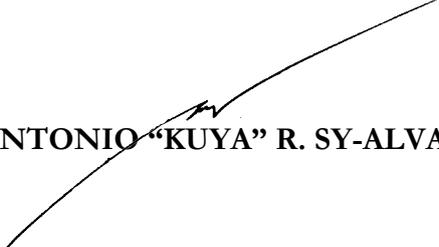

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