

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 30, 2021

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor of New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

The Honorable Eric Adams
Mayor-elect of New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Mayor-elect Adams,

We write to you both with profound concern as we face a rising tide of reported positive test results from COVID-19, due in part to the Omicron variant. On January 3rd, nearly one million public school students and hundreds of thousands of teachers will return to in-person classes. While we applaud your leadership in developing the ‘Stay Safe and Stay Open’ plan, we encourage you to move urgently to deploy rapid COVID-19 test kits to public schools by January 2nd. We do not have a moment to lose.

As you know, our nation is once again experiencing an unprecedented wave of COVID-19 infections. Our nation is posting new daily records that outpace last year’s daily case rate; New York City’s reported positive test rate has been the highest since the pandemic began. Unfortunately, we can expect more troubling data on test results, hospitalizations, and deaths as families return home from holiday travel.

While the Omicron variant and Delta variant continue to spread, we know that rigorous testing and following other public health measures can help keep people, including students, safe. We applaud your leadership and steadfast efforts to secure approximately 3.5 million rapid test kits – including one million from Governor Hochul – for distribution at public schools. These kits, however, must be available by January 2nd. Parents, students, and educators should be able to test themselves before the start of school on January 3rd to reduce the transmission of the virus.

We thank you for your leadership to keep New York City safe and encourage you to make rapid test kits available by January 2nd. If we are to help control the spread of COVID-19, we must test. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
Kirsten Gillibrand

U.S. Senator

____/s/_____
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

____/s/_____
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress