Session of 2021

Senate Resolution No. 1707

By Committee on Public Health and Welfare

A RESOLUTION recognizing the need for the Governor of Kansas to
administer the COVID-19 vaccine to law-abiding Kansans before
administering the vaccine to healthy incarcerated individuals.

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a great deal of
personal, social and economic suffering for Kansans; and

WHEREAS, We acknowledge the triumph of American ingenuity in
developing a vaccine to combat the spread of COVID-19 and the
previous Presidential administration's ability to accelerate and distribute a
vaccine for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, The Governor of Kansas had several months to develop a
comprehensive plan for distributing and administering the COVID-19
vaccine in order to save lives and protect Kansans; and

WHEREAS, On January 4, 2021, the Center for Disease Control
reported that Kansas ranked last in the United States in total vaccines
administered per 100,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, The current data released by the Center for Disease
Control indicates that Kansas ranks 48th out of 50 states for COVID-19
vaccines administered per 100,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, Kansas correctional facilities house the most violent
offenders in our state; and

WHEREAS, The Governor of Kansas submitted a COVID-19
vaccination plan that prioritizes the COVID-19 vaccination of healthy
incarcerated individuals over Kansans between the ages of 16 to 64 who
have severe medical risks; and

WHEREAS, Prioritizing the COVID-19 vaccination of healthy
incarcerated individuals would lead to instances wherein healthy
convicted violent or sexual offenders would be offered life-saving
vaccines before their victims; and

WHEREAS, Governor Kelly and Secretary Norman have reported that
current vaccine capacity falls far too short of the state's ability to
vaccinate all Kansans in Phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccination plan; and

WHEREAS, Kansas Department of Correction employees working in
prisons have already received the vaccine, and they should remain a
priority in Phase 2; and

WHEREAS, We believe the duty of the Kansas Legislature is to
uphold the rule of law and promote the exercise of law-abiding citizens:

Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we call upon

the Governor of Kansas to revise her Administration's current COVID-19

vaccination plan by removing prisoners from the front of the line in Phase

2 and instead prioritizing the vaccination of the elderly, the teachers and

those aged 16 to 64 who have severe medical risks; and

Be it further resolved: That we urge the Office of the Governor of

Kansas to prioritize this issue and respond to the Legislature with their

updated plan without delay; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate shall send 10

enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator Hildebrand.