

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0919

February 12, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the Florida Republican Congressional Delegation, we are concerned about recent reports that your Administration is considering implementing travel restrictions to our beloved home, the Sunshine State. This decision not only lacks merit but is also unequivocally unconstitutional and reeks of partisanship that will only cause reprehensible damage to our state and the more than 21 million Americans who call Florida home.

Nearly one year ago, while you were running for the Democratic presidential nomination, you called the travel ban from China, the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, both "xenophobic" and "fear-mongering."¹ Now, your Administration is reportedly considering a plan that demonstrates an egregious abuse of power in restricting Americans from moving between states—a move that has no standing in science nor law. As the third-largest state in the union, Florida has felt the pain of this pandemic particularly hard. Fortunately, through reasoned leadership and common sense, we have maintained a significantly lower death rate per capita than several states, including New York, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Texas, and even Washington, D.C.²

As a nation, we have learned a tremendous amount about mitigating the damage inflicted upon the American people's health and safety and the economic hardship caused by lockdowns and government mandates. In Florida, we have been able to lessen the financial blow to our small and large businesses by giving Floridians the freedom to go about their daily lives safely and responsibly. Our state is known for its pristine beaches, robust entertainment industry, and relaxed lifestyle that attracts millions of seasonal residents and tourists. Many across our country continue to appreciate Florida's response to the pandemic juxtaposed to the authoritarian measures in many blue states that have shown little to no success in controlling the virus.

More critical than instituting unprecedented restrictions on interstate travel, millions of Floridians, especially our seniors, desperately need your Administration to focus its energy on increasing access to the vaccine. During this pandemic, it is vitally important that we follow the UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION while also following the science and not issues orders that limit the American people's freedoms. In Florida, we are doing just that. Under Governor Ron DeSantis's leadership, Florida has vaccinated more than 1 million seniors, and we continue to prioritize those most vulnerable throughout the state.³ Far too many families and livelihoods have felt the pandemic's unbearable pain, and any plan to ban travel to our state will only exacerbate this feeling.

¹ <https://twitter.com/JoeBiden/status/1240361258957897728?s=20>

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109011/coronavirus-covid19-death-rates-us-by-state/>

³ <https://www.flgov.com/2021/01/22/florida-approaching-1-million-seniors-vaccinated/>

Our constituents need to know their President will not take any misguided actions, such as the reported travel ban directly targeted at Florida. Right now, we need steady leadership and a heightened focus on increasing access to the COVID-19 vaccine. We look forward to playing an integral role in making this a reality.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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