Good afternoon members of P&F and HHN Committees.

I am a member of the Executive Board of Local 2634, Dane County Professional Social Workers. I am writing in that capacity to express concern about Covid-19 vaccine distribution. As an Adult Protective Services (APS) investigator, I am considered an essential worker as WI State Statutes mandate that APS social workers are to see vulnerable adults face-to-face during the course of an investigation. My area of specialty in APS is investigating allegations of abuse or neglect involving adults who have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). These investigations require me to go into homes and conduct interviews with people who often live in congregate settings and due to their I/DD are unable to wear a mask. These individuals are often not practicing proper hand washing hygiene, nor physical distancing, and usually have a number of staff rotating through their home providing personal care. Last week I had an individual grab hand as well as grabbed my glasses off my face. My APS co-workers work with elders, some of whom have dementia, and thus are also not able to practice recommended COVID safety precautions. I believe vaccines should be/should have been prioritized to CPS and APS workers who are presently going into homes and having close contact with the clients we are mandated to see. I believe as a professional group we are able to develop a ranking schedule for workers at greatest risk of exposure to workers at a lesser risk. I believe as essential responders, we should have been given vaccine priority over Job Center staff and the DA's office. I believe greater critical thinking should have been used in prioritizing vaccines.

Respectfully,
Carrie Pomije