

# Legislators call for Massachusetts National Guard to COVID-19 test in public housing, low-income communities

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A group of dozens of lawmakers hoping the state will prioritize COVID-19 testing for vulnerable communities last week called on Gov. Charlie Baker to activate the Massachusetts National Guard to lead mobile testing efforts in public housing, low-income communities, and senior housing facilities.

Led by Sens. Nick Collins and Jamie Eldridge, and Rep. Russell Holmes, the letter got the backing of the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus, and the Massachusetts Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.

“We know that low-income communities suffer from disproportionate rates of asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and other underlying illnesses that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19,” Collins said. “This is simply a question of prioritizing those vulnerable communities, placing equity at the center of our response to this crisis, and addressing these disparities head-on.”

Eldridge said the letter was signed by 23 senators and 36 representatives, and that it calls on Baker and the COVID-19 Command Center to make the next phase of the state’s mobile testing program one that prioritizes disadvantaged communities and is tied in with the state’s contact tracing efforts.