

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 12, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

We are deeply concerned by your decision to fire every member of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This unprecedented action will strip Americans of the ability to make informed decisions about the benefits and risks of vaccinations — the complete opposite of “radical transparency” and “good science”. We are troubled by your recent announcement to appoint several members to the committee¹ who have a documented history of anti-vaccine ideology and peddling misinformation. We urge you to restore legitimacy to this historically non-partisan, science-based, and data-driven committee and immediately reinstate the members of ACIP you have baselessly fired.

ACIP is a longstanding, trusted national source of science- and data-backed advice and guidance on the use of vaccines to prevent and control disease. Members that serve on this committee must undergo extensive vetting and disclose any conflicts of interest. Firing every member of the committee just before their next meeting scheduled for June 25-27 eliminates the advisory board’s ability to debate and make well-informed recommendations, putting American lives at risk. This reckless move is also happening as our nation faces the largest measles outbreak in over 30 years.

This decision appears to be a deliberate effort to repopulate the committee with anti-vaccine demagogues and continue pushing vaccine misinformation to the American people. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, over 80 percent of parents with children under age 18 report that their children receive routine immunizations;² however, a divide based on political ideology is growing. The reality is that most Americans trust the science behind vaccines — but through inaccurate information and politicization, you are eroding the trust in vaccines.

This is just one action of many that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has recently taken to undermine vaccine confidence in the United States. Just over two weeks ago, HHS reversed the CDC recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination.³ This decision was made

¹ <https://x.com/SecKennedy/status/1932899858920120692>

² <https://www.kff.org/health-information-trust/press-release/poll-trust-in-public-health-agencies-and-vaccines-falls-amid-republican-skepticism/>

³ <https://x.com/SecKennedy/status/1927368440811008138>

without the consultation of ACIP or CDC, narrowing recommendations to exclude healthy pregnant people despite pregnancy increasing the risk for severe infection. Just a day later, HHS announced the termination of a contract with Moderna to develop a bird flu vaccine⁴ despite warnings of a future pandemic from infectious disease doctors and public health professionals. These deliberate efforts to sow doubt in the safety and efficacy of vaccines have real consequences — people will die.

In addition to advising everyday Americans on their health decisions, ACIP recommendations also influence whether insurance will cover certain vaccines, making them accessible to insured Americans. Furthermore, ACIP determines the vaccine recommendations for the Vaccines for Children program, which ensures underinsured and uninsured children across the nation can access vaccines at no cost. Without these recommendations, vaccines will become out of reach for far too many Americans. These actions contradict your written responses to questions for the record from the Senate Finance Committee, in which you said “yes” in response to a question about your commitment to ensure there are no financial barriers to accessing safe and effective vaccines.⁵

Vaccines are safe and effective and have significantly reduced, and in some cases entirely eliminated, disease. With recent scientific advances in mRNA technology, vaccines are becoming easier and faster to produce in addressing today’s public health crises.^{6,7} It is critical that ACIP maintains its ability to develop science- and data-driven recommendations on vaccination without interference from anti-vaccine ideology.

Patient safety and transparency is at the heart of ACIP — Americans deserve the ability to make informed decisions about their health. You are stripping Americans of the freedom to choose by your recent appointments to the committee by centering anti-vaccine ideology.⁸ Therefore, we demand that you recuse your personal views on vaccines and restore the ACIP. We urge you to immediately reappoint the members of the committee that you fired and remove those that you have recently appointed that have a documented history of peddling misinformation or undermining vaccine confidence.

Sincerely,

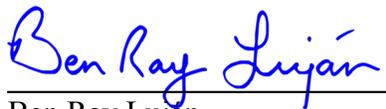
⁴ <https://www.npr.org/2025/05/28/nx-s1-5414642/trump-vaccine-bird-flu-mrna>

⁵ https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/responses_to_questions_for_the_record_to_robert_f_kennedy_jrpart3.pdf

⁶ <https://www.ncoa.org/article/5-important-advantages-of-mrna-vaccines/>

⁷ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9917162/>

⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-health-chief-kennedy-names-new-members-vaccine-advisory-committee-2025-06-11/>



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United States Senator



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United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



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Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
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Tammy Duckworth
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Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



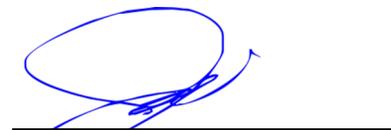
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



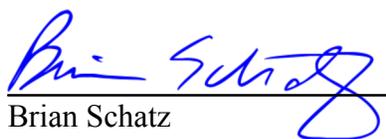
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