

January 9, 2026

Dear [Senator/Representative]:

The undersigned organizations, representing health care clinicians, public health professionals, scientists, patients, and family advocates, **urge you to conduct swift and robust oversight regarding the abrupt changes to the U.S. childhood vaccine schedule announced on Jan. 5, 2026.** It is essential that action is promptly taken to protect vaccine availability and coverage for all previously recommended immunizations for all families, including through the Vaccines for Children program.

This week's overhaul of the childhood vaccine schedule was not based on credible evidence. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that the U.S. would now follow a vaccine schedule that appears to be modeled after guidance used in Denmark. However, the prior U.S. recommendations have been effective in keeping children healthy: studies estimate that from 1994 to 2023, routine childhood vaccinations have prevented approximately 508 million cases of illness, 32 million hospitalizations, and over 1 million deaths in the United States.¹ In addition, vaccine recommendations are largely based on a population's risk of exposure to a disease and how that disease impacts health.

HHS's decision to dismantle a credible childhood vaccine schedule will create even greater confusion for families and health care professionals, and leave more people unprotected against serious vaccine-preventable diseases. These changes lack a clear scientific basis and were made without following the standard process, which ensures transparency and input from the public and key stakeholders. Usually, a multidisciplinary team of experts, part of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), reviews new data about vaccines and disease trends and makes recommendations to federal officials. Last year, the HHS Secretary fired every member of this committee and appointed numerous people who have expressed doubts about the benefits of vaccines in their place. And yet even this newly constituted committee was not afforded the opportunity to publicly discuss this schedule before it was announced.

We urge you to investigate why the schedule was changed, why credible scientific evidence was ignored, and why the committee charged with advising the HHS Secretary on immunizations did not discuss the schedule changes as a part of their public meeting process.

Under HHS's new schedule, numerous vaccines proven to reduce hospitalizations, serious illness and chronic health issues are no longer routinely recommended for children.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7331a2.htm>

Specifically, rotavirus, COVID-19, influenza, meningococcal disease, hepatitis A, and hepatitis B are all downgraded to an unsupported “shared clinical decision making” (SCDM) designation. Immunizations for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and meningococcal disease are now included in a new category, “Immunizations recommended for Certain High-Risk Groups or Populations.” **And while communities across the country endure increasing hospitalizations and deaths from seasonal flu, including the deaths of nine children in the last few months, federal health officials are now no longer recommending the flu vaccine for children.**

Further, insurance coverage for this new three-tiered recommended schedule is not guaranteed under existing statutory and payer frameworks, particularly for those vaccines now falling under an SCDM designation. Downgrading from designating vaccines as recommended for a population to instead saying they are left to SCDM may undermine liability protections under the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP), and calls into question whether those vaccines are still covered by the program.

The confusion and chaos caused by these changes may make parents doubt the benefits of vaccines and delay or skip these vaccines for their children, with devastating and foreseeable impacts, including:

- Increased hospitalizations and deaths due to influenza, including pediatric deaths, like those recently reported in Illinois and Massachusetts, when the U.S. is already facing more influenza cases and lower influenza vaccine rates compared to this time last year.
- Reversal of progress on rotavirus, for which routine vaccination, in just the first five years after it was introduced (2007-2011), averted an average annual 280,000 clinic visits, 62,000 emergency department visits, and 45,000 hospitalizations for commercially insured U.S. children under 5.²
- Negative impacts to community immunity levels for babies too young to be vaccinated and the millions of Americans with weakened immune systems (such as people with cancer and organ transplants) and other risk factors who rely on high rates of vaccination for protection.

Any changes to the recommended immunization schedule, particularly changes of such great magnitude, should be made through a transparent public process through which the scientific data underpinning any potential changes is made public and carefully reviewed by experts. Critically, vaccine recommendations must be based upon the best available scientific data. The recent changes announced to the U.S. immunization schedule do not

² <https://www.cdc.gov/pinkbook/hcp/table-of-contents/chapter-19-rotavirus.html#:~:text=The%20marked%20reduction%20in%20rotavirus%20disease%20burden%20in%20the%20United,age%20for%20the%20final%20dose>

meet these standards, greatly failing any test for “gold-standard science,” which is critical to protect public health and earn public trust.

We urge you to conduct swift and robust oversight regarding the abrupt changes to the U.S. childhood vaccine schedule and its ramifications to our nation’s vaccine infrastructure and children’s health. Our organizations stand ready to help your efforts. We appreciate your attention to this issue, and we look forward to working with you to protect your constituents’ access to life-saving vaccines.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

317 Coalition

Academic Pediatric Association

American Academy of Pediatrics

Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators

Academy of Perinatal Harm Reduction

ATF: Education, Healthcare, Public Services

Allergy & Asthma Network

Alliance for Aging Research

Alliance for Women’s Health and Prevention

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

American Academy of Emergency Medicine

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP)

American Association of Immunologists

American Association of Nurse Practitioners

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists

American Association on Health and Disability

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine

American College of Physicians

American College of Rheumatology

American Families for Vaccines

American Gastroenterological Association

American Geriatrics Society

American Kidney Fund

American Lung Association

American Pediatric Society
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS)
American Society for Meningitis Prevention
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
American Thoracic Society
America's Physician Groups
AMR.Solutions
Arthritis Foundation
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autism Science Foundation
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Big Cities Health Organization
Cancer Nation (formerly National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship)
Caregiver Action Network
Center for Disease Analysis Foundation
Children with Diabetes
Community Catalyst
Council of Medical Specialty Societies
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Defend Public Health
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Emergency Nurses Association
Emily Stillman Foundation
END SEPSIS
Endocrine Society
Families Fighting Flu
Families USA
Generations United
Georgetown University Center for Children and Families
Gerontological Society of America
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality
Global Coalition on Aging
Global Healthy Living Foundation
Global Liver Institute
Grandparents for Vaccines
Hand to Hold
HealthHIV
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association

Hepatitis B Foundation
HIV Medicine Association
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Infectious Diseases Society for Obstetrics and Gynecology
International Vaccine Access Center, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Justice in Aging
Kimberly Coffey Foundation
Lakeshore Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
March of Dimes
NASTAD
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Coalition for Infant Health
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Consumers League
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases
National Health Council
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National Kidney Foundation
National Medical Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National PLACE
National Public Health Coalition (NPHC)
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)
Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC) Society
Neuropathy Action Foundation
NICU Parent Network
NMAC
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition
NTM Info & Research, Inc.
Nurses For America
Nurses Who Vaccinate
Partnership for Innovation and Empowerment
Partnership to Fight Infectious Disease
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society
Pediatric Policy Council
Peggy Lillis Foundation
Premie Adventures
PremieWorld Foundation Inc.
Prevent Blindness
Protect Our Care
Pro-Vaccine Legal Alliance

Public Health Foundation
RetireSafe
SCL-Global Policy Initiative
Sepsis Alliance
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Public Health Education
Society of Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA)
Society of Hospital Medicine
Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)
The AIDS Institute
The Arc of the United States
The J.A.M.I.E. Group
The National Partnership for Women and Families
The Task Force for Global Health
TranactRx
Trust for America's Health
United Spinal Association
Vaccinate Your Family
Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Vaccine Integrity Project
Voices of Alzheimer's
Youth Rally Committee Inc.

State Organizations

Alabama Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
The Arizona Partnership for Immunization
Arizona Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Arkansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
California Chapter 1, American Academy of Pediatrics
California Chapter 3, American Academy of Pediatrics
California Orange County Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Colorado Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Connecticut Public Health Association
Connecticut Society for Public Health Education
Cook County Department of Public Health (Illinois)
Delaware Academy of Medicine and Public Health
Delaware Nurses Association
District of Columbia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
EverThrive Illinois
Family Voices New Jersey
Florida Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Georgia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Hawaii – American Nurses Association
Henry and Stark County Health Department

Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Illinois Migrant Council
Illinois Public Health Association
Illinois State Medical Society
Immunization Coalition of Delaware
Immunize Oregon
Indiana Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Iowa Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Iowa Immunizes
Iowa Public Health Association
Kansas Public Health Association
Kentucky Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Lee County Health Department (Illinois)
Looms For Lupus
Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Maine Families for Vaccines
Maine Public Health Association
Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Massachusetts Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Massachusetts Families for Vaccines
Massachusetts Public Health Alliance
Michigan Public Health Association
Minnesota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Minnesota Public Health Association
Mississippi Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Montana Families for Vaccines
Montana Nurses Association
Montana Public Health Association
Mount Sinai South Nassau
Nebraska Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
New Hampshire Pediatric Society
New Mexico Pediatric Society
New York Chapter 2, American Academy of Pediatrics
New York Chapter 3, American Academy of Pediatrics
New York State Public Health Association
North Carolina Association of Local Health Directors
North Carolina Pediatric Society
North Carolina Public Health Association
Oregon Families for Vaccines
Oregon Pediatric Society
Pediatric Nurse Practitioner House Calls (New York)
Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Public Health Association of Nebraska
Routt County Public Health (Colorado)
Saul's Light (Louisiana)
Tennessee Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Tennessee Families for Vaccines
Tennessee Public Health Association

The Immunization Partnership
Tiny Transitions Therapy Consulting PLLC (Texas)
Utah Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Vermont Public Health Association
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Washington Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Washington State Nurses Association
Washington State Public Health Association
West Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Wisconsin Public Health Association
Woodford County Health Department (Illinois)