

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> <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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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

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<sup>2</sup> <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  
First Focus on Children  
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  
Preemie Adventures  
PreemieWorld Foundation Inc.  
Prevent Blindness  
Protect Our Care

Pro-Vaccine Legal Alliance  
Public Health Foundation  
RetireSafe  
SCL-Global Policy Initiative  
Sepsis Alliance  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine  
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)