

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 7, 2026

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

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

As Members of Congress, we are outraged at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) decision to endanger children and families by undermining the established science-driven and expertly considered U.S. childhood immunization schedule. As Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), your duty to this country is to enhance the well-being of all Americans, and yet this decision will put Americans at unnecessary risk of illness and cost lives. Multiple unvaccinated children have died from vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and pertussis in the last year, and the 2025-2026 flu season is on track to be one of the worst in decades, already taking the lives of 9 children.¹²

Vaccines are rigorously tested and monitored for safety, and there is robust scientific evidence showing that they save millions of lives each year—especially the lives of children. CDC's previous immunization schedule was the result of a methodical, evidence-based scientific process and protected millions of children from seventeen serious and sometimes deadly diseases.

The newly announced immunization schedule reduces the number of universally recommended vaccines from seventeen to eleven—stripping life-saving recommendations for immunization against influenza, rotavirus, COVID-19, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and meningococcal disease.³ The American Academy of Pediatrics continues to recommend that all children receive these vaccines.⁴ This updated schedule and its justifications are based in ideology rather than science and are intended to sow further doubt and confusion about vaccines. This announcement leaves parents with inconsistent, muddled advice, further stoking unfounded fears about vaccine safety—despite the overwhelming evidence of the benefits of universal immunization.

Immunizations have been proven, time and time again, to be safe and effective. Pediatricians already spend time talking with parents about why vaccinations are important to the health and well-being of their children and answering questions. Your updated immunization schedule undermines those conversations and pediatric recommendations. A decrease in childhood immunizations will result in increased pediatrician and emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and deaths. It is especially egregious to do this after this administration slashed Medicaid, health insurance that nearly half the children in this country rely on.

Your agency's decision to overhaul decades of evidence-based science is arbitrary and driven by ideology. This announcement completely bypasses the recommendations made by the previously esteemed Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a panel that you have replaced with your own hand-picked members, most of whom have long track records of anti-vaccine activism. For credibility, the ACIP must

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/fluview/surveillance/2025-week-52.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html>

³ <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/decision-memo-adopting-revised-childhood-adolescent-immunization-schedule.pdf>

⁴ <https://publications.aap.org/redbook/resources/15585/AAP-Immunization-Schedule?autologincheck=redirected>

discuss their recommendations transparently and publicly. Additionally, this decision was made without any substantive input from scientific experts like infectious disease specialists, epidemiologists, and pediatricians.

American children and their families deserve robust evidence-based immunization recommendations that are rooted in science. As the Secretary of Health and Human Services, your continued mission to delegitimize vaccines is antithetical to the oath you pledged to keep Americans healthy. Your politicization of vaccines makes American families less safe, returns the U.S. to an era before routine vaccination prevented millions of infections, and is already resulting in unnecessary suffering and preventable deaths, particularly among children.

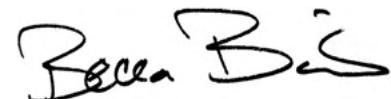
We demand that you reinstate the previous childhood immunization schedule, restore sanctity to the ACIP, and protect the health and wellbeing of children.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



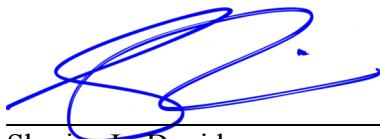
Joseph D. Morelle
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Ami Bera, M.D.
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Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



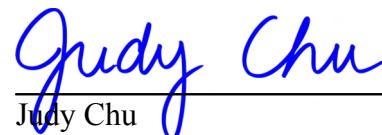
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Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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Judy Chu
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Raul Ruiz, M.D.
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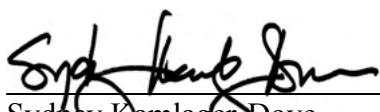
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Rashida Tlaib
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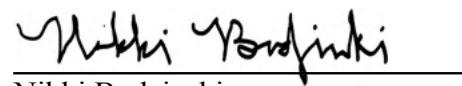
William R. Keating
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Grace Meng
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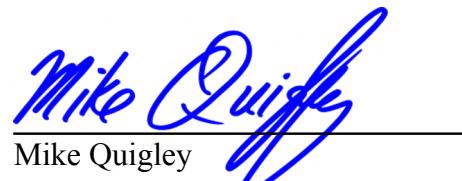
Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



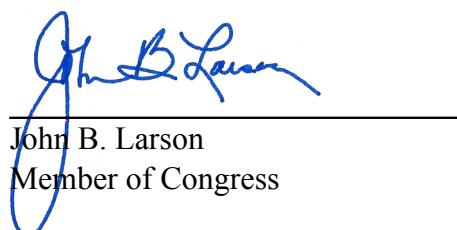
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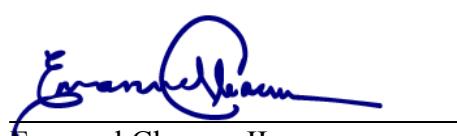
Mike Quigley
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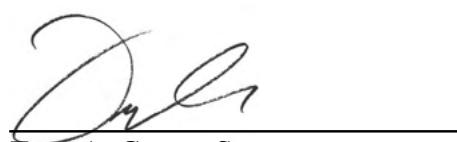
Adam Smith
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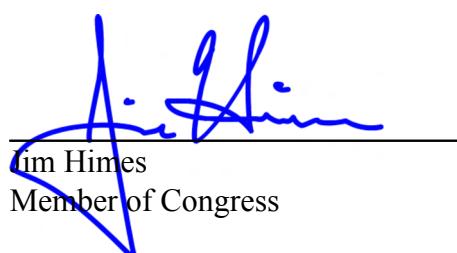
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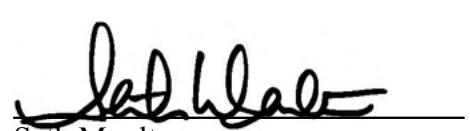
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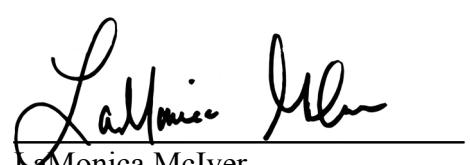
Jamie Raskin
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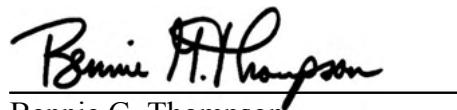
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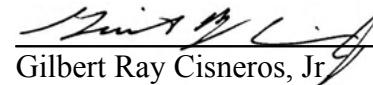
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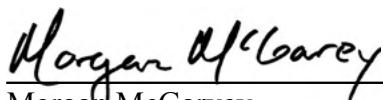
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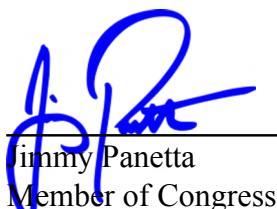
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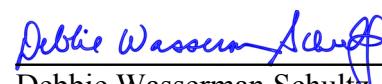
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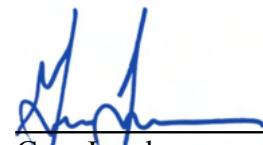
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Chellie Pingree
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Suzanne Bonamici
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Al Green
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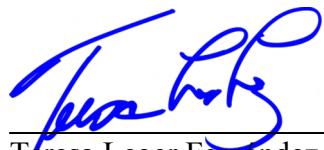
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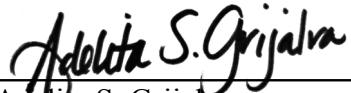
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Luz M. Rivas
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Gabe Amo
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Lizzie Fletcher
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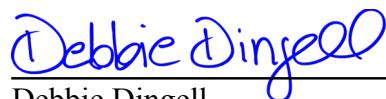
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