

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2026

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

Every August, millions of American families participate in the familiar late-summer ritual of gathering school supplies, scheduling annual wellness checkups, and preparing their children to step back into the classroom. For decades, parents have trusted these routine doctor visits to protect their children against preventable, life-threatening diseases. Your August 10, 2026, Executive Order, “*Delivering Gold Standard Childhood Vaccine Recommendations for Americans*” shatters that consensus.¹ We write to insist that you rescind it immediately.

At a moment when the United States is experiencing the highest surge in measles cases in thirty-five years and an increasing number of states forced to declare public health emergencies - your administration is placing more children in harm's way rather than protecting them.² This Executive Order overrides decades of scientific evidence and sows fear, chaos, and confusion. The result will not be safer or healthier children; it will be a continued decline in vaccination rates, recurring disease outbreaks, higher healthcare costs, and school disruptions that cause learning loss. Vaccines are rigorously tested and monitored for safety, and save millions of lives each year - especially the lives of children.

Unfortunately, this directive is only the latest step in a systematic campaign by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to substitute anti-vaccine ideology for decades of scientific evidence. Since being confirmed, Secretary Kennedy has:

1. Fired all seventeen independent members of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and replaced them with unvetted ideologues who have a history of undermining vaccines.³
2. Peddled unproven treatments as alternatives to safe, effective vaccines, like cod liver oil for measles, putting young children in the hospital with liver damage.⁴

1 Exec. Order, “Deliver Gold Standard Childhood Vaccine Recommendations for Americans,” Donald J. Trump (Aug. 10, 2026) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/08/delivering-gold-standard-childhood-vaccine-recommendations-for-americans/>.

2 Mariam E. Sunny et. al, *US measles cases hit 35-year high as vaccinations decline*, Reuters (July 24, 2026) <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-cdc-records-over-2300-measles-cases-so-far-2026-07-24/>.

3 Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., *HHS Takes Bold Step to Restore Public Trust in Vaccines by Reconstituting ACIP* (June 9, 2025), <https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/hhs-restore-public-trust-vaccines-acip.html>.

3. Pressured leadership of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to approve unscientific recommendations while removing vital public health information and publishing false or misleading claims on agency websites, such as the CDC's autism and vaccines page.⁵
4. Canceled critical mRNA research and endorsed false claims that mRNA vaccines cause widespread harm and repeatedly spread disproven theories linking vaccines to autism, despite dozens of studies proving otherwise.⁶
5. Attempted to alter the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program in a manner that threatened to drive vaccine manufacturers out of the market entirely.⁷

This latest directive encouraging the breakup of combination vaccines, such as the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) shot, into single-disease doses over multiple doctor's visits defies medical evidence and places additional burdens on families. Leading medical professionals agree that combination vaccines are safe, effective, and specifically timed to protect children when they require that immunity.⁸ Moreover, separate single-dose options for MMR are not even currently available in the United States, meaning drug manufacturers would be forced to navigate a complex, years-long approval process. This order leaves parents with inconsistent, muddled advice, further stoking unfounded fears about vaccine safety, despite the overwhelming evidence of the benefits of universal immunization for the MMR vaccine. That is not "gold standard" medicine. It is manufactured chaos.

Forcing parents to schedule and pay co-pays for multiple medical visits for immunizations that were previously administered at a single appointment creates financial and logistical hardship, and is cruel to children. These burdens are compounded by the severe cuts to Medicaid and the *Affordable Care Act* enacted under the *One Big, Beautiful Big Act*, which are leaving working families without access to a primary care physician. Moreover, it increases burden for pediatricians who already face packed schedules.

Finally, directing the Department of Justice to challenge long-standing state school immunization requirements perpetuates dangerous uncertainty in local communities and directly threatens public health. Overturning established, evidence-based vaccine policies creates a chaotic patchwork of rules that leaves parents, school districts, and health officials without clear

4 Teddy Rosenbluth, *Remedy Supported by Kennedy Leaves Some Measles Patients More Ill*, New York Times (March 25, 2025) <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/25/health/measles-kennedy-vitamin-a.html>.

5 Daniel Payne, *Inside the CDC director's ouster: Kennedy demanded acceptance of new vaccine policies; Susan Monarez refused*, STAT NEWS (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://www.statnews.com/2025/08/28/cdc-director-fired-behindthe-scenes-look>.

6 Mary Kekatos, *RFK Jr. cancels at least \$500M in mRNA vaccine funding. What are the implications?*, ABC News (Aug. 6, 2025) <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/rfk-jr-cancels-500m-mrna-vaccine-funding-implications/story?id=124406624>.

7 Sarah Oweremohle, *Kennedy announces plan to reform Vaccine Injury Compensation Program*, CNN (July 28, 2025) <https://www.cnn.com/2025/07/28/health/vaccine-injury-compensation-program-rfk>.

8 American Academy of Pediatrics, *Fact Checked: Receiving Multiple Vaccines Does Not Overwhelm a Child's Immune System*, (Oct. 10, 2025) https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/fact-checked/fact-checked-receiving-multiple-vaccines-does-not-overwhelm-a-childs-immune-system/?srsltid=AfmBOopZAYhifE7Fl4mSLdLK7tgMPS_MM7QmT5dSPPxjOScDqSYn1v0r.

guidance, while ignoring the vast majority of parents (81%) who agree that public schools should require students to receive essential immunizations like the measles and polio vaccines.⁹

The health and safety of America's children must not be sacrificed for political theater and ideology. American children and their families deserve robust evidence-based immunization recommendations that are rooted in science. The administration's politicization of vaccines makes American families less safe, threatens to return 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.

Every day this Executive Order remains in effect, more children go without the vaccines that would protect them, additional outbreaks become more likely, and lives are put at risk. We urge you to rescind this Executive Order immediately and restore evidence-based decision-making to federal public health policy.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

⁹ KFF and The Washington Post, *New KFF-Washington Post survey explores parents' trust in, and confusion about, childhood vaccines as the Trump administration revamps federal policies*, (September 15, 2025) <https://www.kff.org/public-opinion/new-kff-washington-post-survey-explores-parents-trust-in-and-confusion-about-childhood-vaccines-as-the-trump-administration-revamps-federal-policies/>.



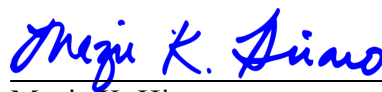
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



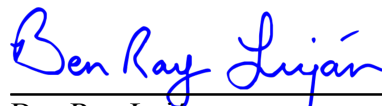
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



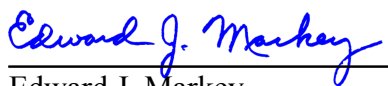
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



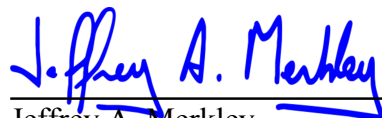
Andy Kim
United States Senator



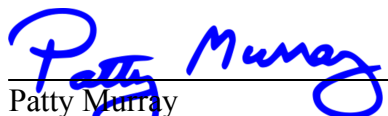
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



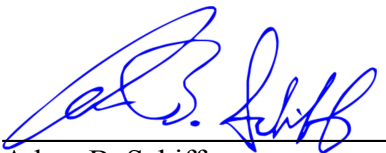
Jack Reed
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



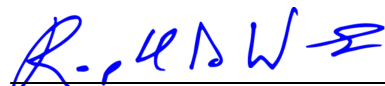
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



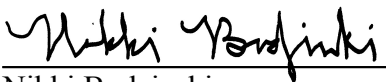
Jake Auchincloss
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



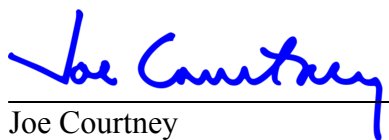
Troy A. Carter, Sr.
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Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



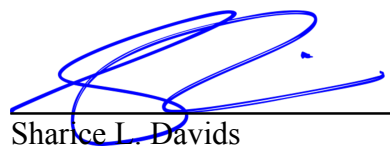
Joe Courtney
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Jason Crow
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Sharice L. Davids
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Diana DeGette
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Suzan K. DelBene
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Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



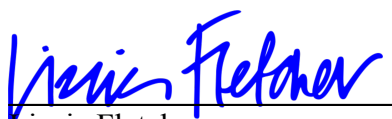
Mark DeSaulnier
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Maxine Dexter, M.D.
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Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



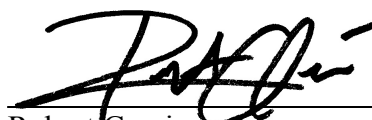
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



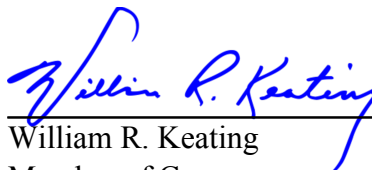
John Garamendi
Member of Congress



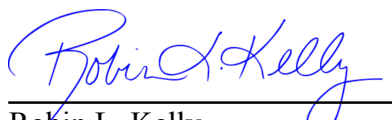
Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



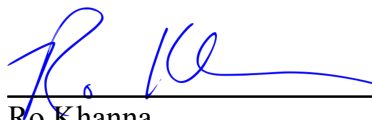
Adenita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



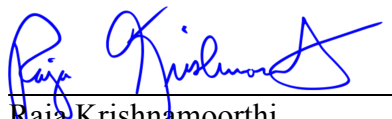
William R. Keating
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Greg Landsman
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Summer L. Lee
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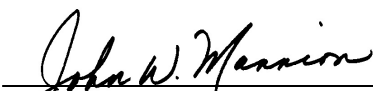
Mike Levin
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Sam T. Liccardo
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Stephen F. Lynch
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John W. Mannion
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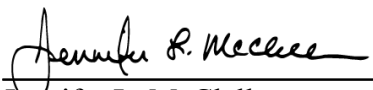
Doris Matsui
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Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



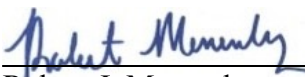
Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



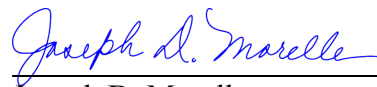
Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



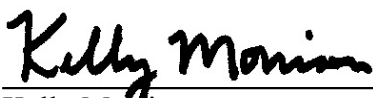
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



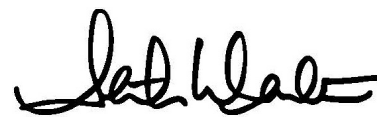
Robert J. Menendez
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Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



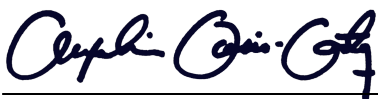
Seth Moulton
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Kevin Mullin
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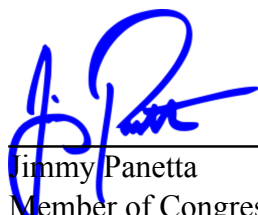
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



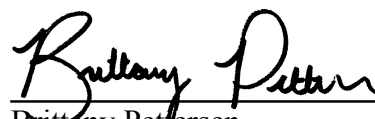
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



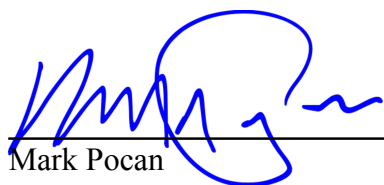
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



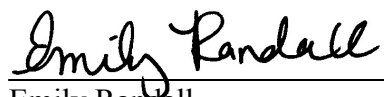
Brittany Petersen
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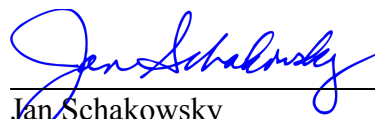
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Shri Thanedar
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Mike Thompson
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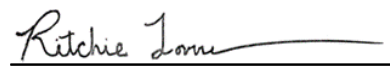
Rashida Tlaib
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Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



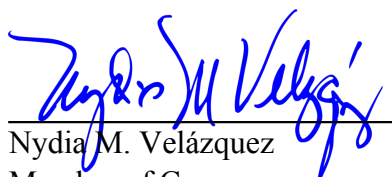
Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



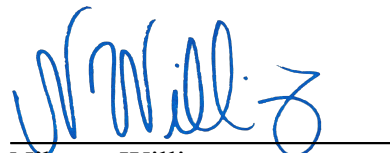
Lori Trahan
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Marc A. Veasey
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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