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October 21, 2022

ACIP Committee
Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services
1600 Clifton Rd., NE, MS H24-8
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

Re: Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meeting, Fed. Reg. Doc. No. 2022-20045; Docket No. CDC-2022-0111

We, the undersigned Attorney Generals of our respective States, write to you today regarding two votes taken at the October 2022 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meetings this week. It has been reported that ACIP voted to include the COVID-19 vaccination on the list of child immunizations. As a preliminary matter, we are very concerned with ACIP's premature vote, which was taken prior to the close of the comment period.

We have additional concerns. States have traditionally relied heavily on these lists to inform their vaccination policies. As a result, in many states, your decision is unnecessary and subjects children to retaliation for their parent or guardian's decisions to decline this vaccination. Moreover, this action could deny many parents the freedom to determine whether to subject their kids to an experimental vaccine. ICIP also will consider whether to include the COVID-19 vaccine in the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC). This, too, would be a mistake. ICIP, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the medical community need to stop forcing unproven policies and medicines on children who are not at risk of bodily harm. Both considerations should be rejected at the meeting.

To begin, it would make little sense for the ACIP to add the COVID-19 shot to the list of childhood immunizations. Children are at little risk of death from COVID-19.¹ Vaccines currently on the schedule provide protection against deadly viruses such as polio, measles, mumps, and rotavirus.² Such viruses have killed millions of children over the years, and when children are not vaccinated against these viruses they are at risk of serious illness or death.³ COVID-19, however, is different. COVID-19 does not pose the same danger to kids as polio or measles, nor does the

¹ Smith, C., Odd, D., Harwood, R. *et al.* Deaths in children and young people in England after SARS-CoV-2 infection during the first pandemic year. *Nat Med* **28**, 185–192 (2022). <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-021-01578-1#article-info> (last visited October 19, 2022).

² <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html> (last visited October 19, 2022).

³For example, see: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/24/health/measles-outbreak-zimbabwe.html>

vaccine provide the same protection. While most vaccines prevent the vaccinated individual from getting the disease in the first place and stop the spread of the disease, the COVID-19 vaccine does neither. In fact, as a Pfizer official testified before the EU Parliament recently, the vaccine was *never tested* to prevent spread.⁴ However, this is not what Americans were led to believe. Instead, getting the vaccine was described as a duty to others for the social good and even as a religious imperative.⁵ Despite these proclamations, demonizing of the unvaccinated, dismissing and demonizing those who probed these positions and data, and Pfizer saying we would need a *fourth* shot,⁶ people still get COVID-19. Even the CEO of Pfizer and President Biden.

The first rule of medicine is to do no harm. But these actions cause a great deal of harm. Putting the COVID-19 vaccine on the list of vaccines for children could would undoubtedly accelerate a rejection by many American families of more traditional vaccinations due to the CDC's increasingly sullied credibility. There is still much we do not know about the virus, its origins, and, importantly, the vaccines. And there is widespread disagreement as to whether kids need to be vaccinated.⁷ It is far too early in the process to potentially require otherwise healthy kids to get a vaccine that will not prevent them or others from getting sick. In fact, the vaccine could do the opposite and create complications for kids who are forced to get the vaccine to attend school or play sports.⁸ Such complications, besides the medical ones like myocarditis that continue to be researched, include the well-documented consequences of isolating children from peers and other adults and the loss of educational progress.

Given the lack of need for kids to obtain the vaccines and their lack of effectiveness, adding the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of childhood immunizations amounts to little more than a payout to big pharmaceutical companies at the expense of kids and parents.

Second, with respect to the VFC, ACIP should likewise tread carefully. The VFC is a program created by Congress in the wake of a measles outbreak to ensure that kids from low-income families have *access* to free vaccines. But the COVID-19 vaccine does not provide the same protection against life threatening illnesses. Instead, it could put more kids at risk instead of protecting them which is the purpose of the VCF. The CDC should not be treating kids in low-income households as lab experiments. Nor should pharmaceutical companies be allowed to use low-income families as cash cows.

We should apply lessons learned from the opioid crisis here. Given the circumstances, the ACIP should view the vaccines and pharmaceutical companies' incentives with a healthy dose of skepticism. The CDC and ACIP should be playing devil's advocate to protect children in low-income families from potential disastrous consequences. The evidence demonstrates that COVID-19 itself does not pose a harm to kids. Parents continue to have a choice as to vaccinating their children. So why put pressure on families to vaccinate their kids against a virus that poses little

⁴ <https://www.outkick.com/pfizer-admits-it-had-no-idea-if-mrna-vaccine-would-prevent-transmission/>

⁵ <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/guest-commentary/os-op-coronavirus-vaccine-love-your-neighbor-20210916-pmnl6dtwhvctvmvnsi5hhtii-story.html>

⁶ <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/13/pfizer-covid-booster-ceo-00016883>

⁷ <https://khn.org/news/article/covid-vaccination-children-rare-side-effects-myocarditis-experts-caution/>

⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-cdc-says-covid-vaccine-related-myocarditis-much-lower-children-than-teens-2022-05-19/>

risk to them? Questions such as these should be answered in full, publicly, and the CDC should respond to comments before taking any action on adding the COVID-19 vaccine to the VFC.

While we rarely agree with President Biden on policy matters, we do agree with him that “[t]he pandemic is over.”⁹ Masks are not required on planes and buses, concerts and festivals are in full swing, football stadiums are packed full, employees are back in the office, and school closures are all but a thing of the past. The fallout of school closures and the forced masking of kids, however, continues.¹⁰ Yet, despite these failures of misguided politicians, government bureaucrats, and their select experts, some want to continue the forced social and medical experiments on kids. A modicum of humility is in order from the elites who demanded Americans’ trust then betrayed it with failed policies, and simultaneously ensured that those with the audacity to question the individuals wielding such power over individual lives and livelihoods would be targeted for censorship and blame.

Our Nation’s children are not the federal government’s guinea pigs. As a country that failed so many children over the last couple of years, we owe it to them and their parents to take a responsible path forward. The ACIP should reject considerations of adding the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of childhood immunities and the VFC.

Respectfully,



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Eric Schmitt
Missouri Attorney General



Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



Austin Knudsen
Montana Attorney General

⁹ <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/09/19/biden-pandemic-over-covid-team-response-00057649>

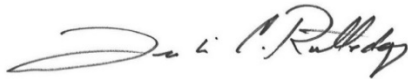
¹⁰ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2022/03/03/the-pandemic-has-had-devastating-impacts-on-learning-what-will-it-take-to-help-students-catch-up/>



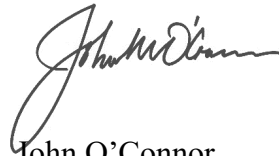
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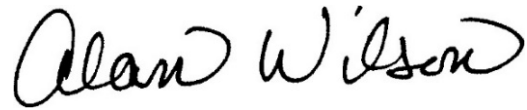
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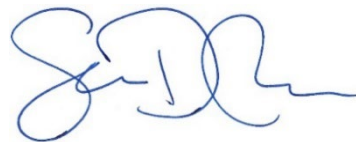
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