

March 28, 2025

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, MD  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor  
& Pensions  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor &  
Pensions  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Cassidy and Ranking Member Sanders:

We, the undersigned medical, public health and patient organizations, write with grave concern about our nation's ongoing ability to respond to widespread health crises. We urge you to ensure that our nation has the workforce, infrastructure, and expertise it needs to prevent and respond to disease outbreaks, and we stand ready to assist you in achieving this goal.

As you know, the measles outbreak that began in the Southwest United States is spreading to other parts of the country. As of March 27, there have been 483 confirmed cases of measles in twenty states, 70 people have been hospitalized,<sup>1</sup> and experts are concerned that this could represent a significant undercount. Evidence appears to indicate that this outbreak is not under control, and is actually spreading; sadly, two people have already died. Measles is a highly contagious, acute viral disease that can affect individuals across the life course. When one person has measles, they can infect up to 9 out of 10 unvaccinated, susceptible individuals they come into close contact with, and the measles virus can remain infectious in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours after an infected person leaves an area.<sup>2</sup> Measles can be fatal in 1-3 out of 1000 cases and 1 in 5 children with measles will be sick enough to need hospitalization.<sup>3</sup>

Measles outbreak responses are labor and resource intensive. The majority of the work falls to local jurisdictions; however, it is the role of the Federal health agencies like CDC to provide jurisdictions with support, including financial resources, medical and epidemiology expertise, vaccines, therapeutics, and, importantly, clear, consistent, evidence-based messaging. Local, state, and federal public health experts rely on data, communications, and guidance from the federal partners like CDC to receive guidance during outbreaks.

This outbreak is occurring on the heels of the worst flu season in over a decade. There have been 159 pediatric deaths, and at least 44 million illnesses, 580,000 hospitalizations, and 25,000 deaths from

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nfid.org/infectious-disease/measles/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/signs-symptoms/index.html>

flu so far this season.<sup>4</sup> Finally, in addition to the challenges posed by the severity of these illnesses, the public health community is working under reduced federal staffing and funding levels at CDC.

We urge the HELP Committee to consider how any future director of the CDC will address these challenges. The agency and its leadership must be accountable and must ensure that our public health infrastructure is prepared to prevent and to respond to the current outbreak and any future health crises. We look forward to working with you to help keep Americans safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families  
Alliance for Aging Research  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Physicians  
American Lung Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Meningitis Prevention  
AMR.Solutions  
Arizona Families for Vaccines  
Arkansas Immunization Action Coalition (Immunize Arkansas)  
Arizona Partnership for Immunization  
Association of Immunization Managers  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
California Immunization Coalition  
Caregiver Action Network  
Colorado Families for Vaccines  
Community Catalyst  
Connecticut Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Delaware Academy of Medicine and Delaware Public Health Association  
Denver Health  
Dia de la Mujer Latina Inc  
Families Fighting Flu  
Families USA  
First Focus on Children  
Gerontological Society of America  
Head & Neck Cancer Alliance  
HealthHIV

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/fluview/surveillance/2025-week-12.html>

HealthyWomen  
Idaho Immunization Coalition  
Illinois Public Health Association  
Immunization Alliance of Michigan  
Immunization Coalition of Delaware  
Immunize Colorado  
Immunize Kansas Coalition  
Immunize South Dakota  
Immunize.org  
ImmunizeVA  
Indiana Immunization Coalition  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Integrita Healthcare Education Foundation  
Kimberly Coffey Foundation  
Langlade County Immunization Coalition  
Latinx Voices  
Louisiana Families for Vaccines  
March of Dimes  
Marked By Covid  
Massachusetts Adult Immunization Coalition  
Massachusetts Families for Vaccines  
Montana Families for Vaccines  
MyCARE Foundation  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Consumers League  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
National League for Nursing  
New Hampshire Families for Vaccines  
New Mexico Immunization Coalition  
North Carolina Immunization Coalition  
NTM Info & Research  
Oklahoma Alliance for Healthy Families  
Oklahoma Caring Foundation  
Oregon Families for Vaccines  
Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease  
Partnership to Fight Infectious Disease  
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS)  
Pediatric Nurse Practitioner House Calls  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Primary Care Development Corporation  
SAFE Communities Coalition  
Sepsis Alliance  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM)

Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Society for Pediatric Research  
South Dakota Families for Vaccines  
STChealth  
Stuart B. Levy Center for Integrated Management of Antimicrobial Resistance at Tufts  
Tennessee Families for Vaccines  
UnidosUS  
Vaccinate Your Family  
Vaccine Ambassadors  
Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
West Virginia Families for Immunizations