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RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115
Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

October 21, 2022

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
State of Washington
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

Yesterday the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) voted to add COVID-19 vaccinations to the recommended schedule of vaccines for both adults and children. I write to ask that you do not mandate COVID-19 vaccines for healthy children and leave that decision to parents and their pediatricians.

Existing law in Washington State cites the ACIP recommendations from 2019,¹ and if that date was simply updated to 2022, families across the State may be forced to choose between either sending their children to public school or making the best decision for their health. CDC has made clear that the recommendations are not indicative of a support of a mandate on all children, and that decision is left to States.² However, throughout the pandemic you have repeatedly used CDC guidance as justification for heavy-handed mandates that kept children out of school and masked them when they were finally allowed to go back. I am concerned that you will use the CDC's latest action to continue your record of harmful government mandates on our children and strip parents of their rights.

There is not consensus in the medical community that the COVID-19 vaccines should be given to healthy children, especially under the age of 11. Sweden decided against recommending COVID vaccines for healthy children aged 5 to 11, with their lead health agency stating, "we don't see any clear benefit to vaccinating them."³ In addition, many physicians have stated that it

¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=246-105-040>

² https://twitter.com/CDCgov/status/1582765356275228673?s=20&t=fvgGgKPyKW2QrQxqTjW3_A

³³ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/sweden-decides-against-recommending-covid-vaccines-kids-aged-5-12-2022-01-27/>

is more important to provide the vaccine globally to those over 65 than use those doses on healthy children in the U.S.⁴

The State of Washington had the longest public health emergency due to COVID-19 in the country. It was the 47th State to reopen schools, which has led to learning loss and devastating mental health consequences that could last a lifetime.⁵ Now that schools are finally open for in-person learning, children are starting to regain a sense of normalcy. I urge you not to throw that in question by doubling down with a heavy-handed mandate, forcing healthy children to take COVID-19 vaccines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathy McMorris Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Republican Leader
Committee on Energy and Commerce

⁴ <https://www.medpagetoday.com/opinion/marty-makary/93029>

⁵ <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/detail/study-reveals-washington-states-school-closure-policy-caused-learning-loss-life-long-harms>