

January XX, 2017

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

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of organizations representing families, providers, patients, and consumers, we write to express our unequivocal support for the safety of vaccines. Vaccines protect the health of children and adults and save lives. They prevent life-threatening diseases, including forms of cancer. Vaccines have been part of the fabric of our society for decades and are one of the most significant medical innovations of our time.

Because of the introduction of mass vaccinations, smallpox was declared eradicated from the world in 1977. Polio, a disease that routinely afflicted 13,000 to 20,000 Americans every year in the United States before the availability of the vaccine, was officially eliminated from the Western Hemisphere in 1991. Globally, vaccines prevent the deaths of roughly 2.5 million children per year.¹ And, data shows that just for children born in the United States in 2009, routine childhood immunizations will prevent approximately 42,000 early deaths and 20 million cases of disease with savings of more than \$82 billion in societal costs.²

Although vaccines are the safest and most cost-effective way of preventing disease, disability and death, this country still witnesses outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases, as highlighted by the measles outbreak at Disneyland in 2014. In 2012, 48,277 cases of pertussis (whooping cough) were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including 20 pertussis-related deaths.³ This was the most reported cases of pertussis since 1955. In addition, each year, more than 200,000 individuals are hospitalized and 3,000-49,000 deaths occur from influenza-related complications.⁴

Claims that vaccines are unsafe when administered according to expert recommendations have been disproven by a robust body of medical literature, including a thorough review by the Institutes of Medicine. Attached to this letter is a non-exhaustive list of studies demonstrating the safety of vaccines. Delaying vaccines only leaves our nation's citizens at risk of disease, particularly children. As a nation we should redouble our efforts to make needed investments in

¹ UNICEF. Immunization: Keeping Children Alive and Healthy.

https://www.unicef.org/immunization/files/Immunization_brochure.pdf

² Economic Evaluation of the Routine Childhood Immunization Program in the United States, 2009

Fangjun Zhou, Abigail Shefer, Jay Wenger, Mark Messonnier, Li Yan Wang, Adriana Lopez, Matthew Moore, Trudy V. Murphy, Margaret Cortese, Lance Rodewald. *Pediatrics* Apr 2014, 133 (4) 577-585; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2013-0698.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2012 Final Pertussis Surveillance Report.

<https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/downloads/pertuss-surv-report-2012.pdf>

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Questions & Answers: Seasonal Influenza.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/disease.htm>. Accessed August 26, 2015.

patient and family education about the importance of vaccines in order to increase the rate of vaccination among all populations.

Put simply: Vaccines are safe. Vaccines are effective. Vaccines save lives. Our organizations welcome the opportunity to meet with you to share the robust, extensive scientific evidence supporting vaccine safety and effectiveness.

Sincerely,