

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2004

October 25, 2021

The Honorable Joseph Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We are writing to you as members of the GOP Doctors Caucus, and we would like to express our deep concern regarding Executive Order 14043, requiring COVID-19 vaccination for Federal employees. We strongly urge you to reverse this mandate. If you choose to move forward, we ask that you revise the Administration's policy to provide Federal employees the ability to test-out from any vaccination requirement if they can demonstrate natural immunity to the disease. In addition, we urge you to allow routine testing as an alternative to mandatory vaccination for those who choose to forgo vaccination and cannot prove natural immunity.

In our capacity as Members of Congress with professional health care backgrounds, we have been educating our constituents and the broader American public on the safety, efficacy, and utility of the COVID-19 vaccines developed under Operation Warp Speed and authorized for use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) since well before you took office. We understand that vaccination is the prudent medical decision for most individuals. However, the decision to get vaccinated, as with all health care decisions, should be made by patients in consultation with their trusted physicians. Further, vaccine mandates imposed by the Federal government erode public trust in the vaccines, thereby undermining your stated goal of vaccinating more Americans. Accordingly, we feel strongly that your Administration should promote multiple pathways to safety and immunity that include vaccination, proof of natural immunity, and routine testing.

Allowing test-out options for vaccine requirements to include natural immunity is not a novel policy. The European Union has acknowledged that immunity is not solely vaccine-induced and will allow certain travelers who have either recovered from COVID-19 or can provide a recent negative test to hold the same safety certificate as vaccinated individuals.¹ The presence of natural immunity (as well as vaccine-induced immunity) is detectable through existing diagnostic technologies, such as authorized T cell testing.

For Federal employees who opt to not receive the COVID-19 vaccine and cannot demonstrate natural immunity, routine testing is a reasonable and readily available accommodation. Such an alternative would not endanger the Federal mission and would allow them to continue their service without risking accrued benefits or employment due to a personal medical decision. Surely such a reasonable approach is preferable to mass layoffs that would endanger ongoing Federal operations.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_1181

Additionally, moving forward we ask that you include a focus on therapeutic advancements in your COVID-19 response plan. We understand that breakthrough cases occur for vaccinated patients. While patients with breakthrough cases of COVID-19 present with less severe symptoms, physicians will need access to therapeutics as a tool to treat both vaccinated and unvaccinated patients. We want to ensure that the Administration is committed to developing and highlighting the utility of COVID-19 therapeutics.

In closing, as the Administration directs the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force to issue strict vaccine mandates for Federal employees, we strongly urge you not to move forward with this mandate. If you do, we ask that you exempt employees who can provide proof of natural immunity and to consider allowing unvaccinated individuals to continue their employment subject to routine COVID-19 testing. Thank you for your attention to this important and time-sensitive matter.

Sincerely,



Andy Harris, M.D.
Member of Congress



Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress



Roger Marshall, M.D.
U.S. Senator



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



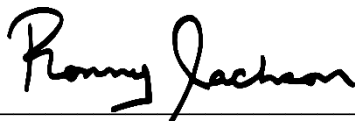
Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
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