

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1601
August 26, 2021

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK AND
FOREIGN AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GENERAL FARM
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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND INVESTIGATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The Honorable Joe Biden
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

On August 18, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a press release stating they will soon publish a regulation requiring all Medicare and Medicaid-participating nursing home staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of receiving reimbursements. As you know, nursing homes receive roughly 80 percent of their funding through Medicare and Medicaid programs. To maintain solvency, nursing homes must comply with CMS regulations. **I write to express my concerns with this forthcoming regulation and urge your Administration to reconsider this approach.**

According to CMS, 57 percent of nursing home staff in Kansas have chosen to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This leaves a sizable population of staff members who have made the personal decision to remain unvaccinated. I do not doubt that you decided to mandate vaccines for long-term care staff with the interest of residents in mind; however, I fear the impending regulation will have disastrous consequences and result in massive workforce shortages, lower quality of care for nursing home residents, and even facility closures.

Like most other health care facilities, nursing homes are already experiencing dire worker shortages, with staff members working overtime to ensure all residents receive adequate care. Industry leaders in Kansas estimate vaccine mandates would result in nursing homes losing up to 20 percent of their staff. The loss of any additional staff would result in reduced standards of care for the residents of nursing homes and potentially force facilities to close their doors, reducing health care options for patients and displacing countless elderly residents.

I strongly encourage you to reconsider issuing a broad-sweeping vaccine mandate for nursing homes to maintain care standards for elderly residents and allow facilities to remain open.

Sincerely,



Tracey Mann
Member of Congress