

Docket: CDC-2025-0024

Public Comment for the June 25-27, 2025, CDC ACIP Committee Meeting

To RFK Jr. and Members of the CDC ACIP committee:

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Like other scientists and healthcare providers, I am very concerned about the recent termination of all 17 members of the CDC ACIP committee. We need fair, independent expert evaluation to make Americans as healthy as possible, a crucial factor of which is reducing incidence and prevalence of vaccine-preventable diseases. Morbidity and mortality are much lower now than in decades past directly because of the impact that vaccines have had in saving lives and keeping people healthy.

I am personally thankful for scientists who make new discoveries and work hard to bring these life saving tools to us continuously, in the past, present and future. When I was in my mid-30's, I had a Shingles reaction. As you know, Shingles is a risk for everyone who has ever had Varicella (Chickenpox), and it comes with serious risks, including nerve damage, life long pain, blindness, etc. Unfortunately, when I got Chickenpox as a one-year old, the vaccine didn't exist. And no one has any control over the resurgence of the varicella virus that happens with Shingles, except for the sole prevention of vaccination. I was lucky to have been able to pay out of pocket for the Shingrix vaccine, although it is recommended for an older cohort, but the peace of mind in avoiding another bout of Shingles and its risks was worth it. I'm so glad I had that option.

Vaccines should be widely available by FDA approval, and CDC recommendations should protect as many people as possible. In particular, recommendations for children are the only way to keep Americans healthy, as without them, the spread of those diseases is uncontrollable and would affect everyone, regardless of demographics or socioeconomic status. Without vaccines, we risk sliding back into the dire situation of years past, when many children died of diseases that are completely preventable with the valuable safe vaccines we have by FDA approval and under EUA. For my own young children, they have been in perfect health following the current CDC recommendations, and I hope additional life saving breakthroughs will continue to be available for their lifetimes and their children's lifetimes. The Covid-19 vaccines are particularly important now, as the spread of mutated variants still causes more illness than most other viruses, and children born since the onset of the pandemic are not protected like those of us who have been vaccinated. To go back to the high morbidity of 2020 would be tragic, especially considering how vulnerable unvaccinated children are. Similarly, diseases like whooping cough, RSV, and even measles, which was previously eradicated here, are having resurgences. We must keep people safe and healthy through a robust vaccination recommendation to maintain herd immunity, which starts with vaccinating children and continues through the lifetime where scientifically indicated.

I have been proud to live in a country with the world's best public health organization leading the way, where vaccines and other preventive measures are the gold standard for other countries to emulate. Please continue on the unbiased path of rigorous science that the CDC has been known for over the decades, and do not risk diminishing it, which would make Americans very sick again and lower life expectancy.