

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 4, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dr. Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Secretary Azar and Director Redfield:

We write to express our deep concern regarding the current Data Use Agreement to which states are required to commit in order to initiate their COVID-19 vaccination program, and urge you to: 1) revise this agreement; and 2) prohibit any individual data from being shared with other federal agencies. Failure to do so could dangerously undermine the entire vaccination process, and thereby jeopardize our national health and recovery from this pandemic.

First, the current Data Use Agreement requires identification of each vaccinated person, and thereby suggests states to collect Social Security number, passport number, or driver license identification number. Suggesting these types of identification data is akin to disclosing one's immigration status. Just as COVID-19 does not distinguish one's immigration status, neither should the administration of COVID-19 vaccines.

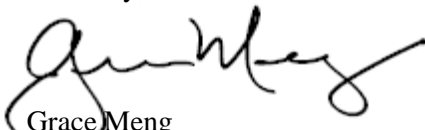
Second, it is our understanding that a provision in the Data Use Agreement would allow these identification data to be shared between federal agencies. Individuals must not fear their personal information being disclosed to the Department of Homeland Security, or any other non-health related entity. No one should have to choose between their health or their immigration status. Such provisions will instill fear in our immigrant communities; deter immigrants from being vaccinated; and upend the efficacy of any vaccination program or our country's ability to overcome this national public health emergency.

As such, we urge you to promptly revise states' Data Use Agreement such that:

- (1) states are not required to collect recipient identification information, specifically Social Security number, passport number, and driver license number, for COVID-19 vaccination purposes; and
- (2) non-health-related federal agencies must be prohibited from accessing any identification information collected from vaccinated persons.

As we continue our fight against this highly contagious and invisible enemy, we must keep in mind that immigrants make up a disproportionate number of essential workers who risk their own lives to save lives, keep our cities running, and ensure Americans have access to food. With record-breaking numbers of new COVID-19 cases across the U.S. and more projected through this holiday season, we urge you to swiftly make the necessary changes to the Data Use Agreement, so that all people – regardless of background and immigration status – will access the vaccines without fear or reservation. We look forward to hearing from you by Wednesday, December 9, 2020 on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng
Member of Congress

/s/ Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/ Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

/s/ Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

/s/ Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

/s/ Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

/s/ Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/ Dina Titus
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

/s/ Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

/s/ Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

/s/ Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

/s/ Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

/s/ Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/ Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

/s/ Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/ Scott Peters
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

/s/ Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

/s/ Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/ Debra Haaland
Member of Congress

/s/ Judy Chu
Member of Congress

/s/ Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

/s/ Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/ Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

/s/ Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

/s/ José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

/s/ Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

/s/ John B. Larson
Member of Congress

/s/ Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

/s/ Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark Takano
Member of Congress

/s/ James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

/s/ Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

/s/ Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

/s/ Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

/s/ Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

/s/ Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

/s/ Al Green
Member of Congress