



THE
IMMUNIZATION
PARTNERSHIP

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Oral Public Comment
Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)

Good afternoon, Chair Romero and members of the Committee. My name is Allison Winnike and I am president and CEO of The Immunization Partnership.

Our non-profit mission is to eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases by educating the community, advocating for evidence-based public policy, and supporting immunization best practices.

Thank you for developing scientific vaccine recommendations to keep all Americans safe and healthy. Your recommendations are an important tool that states use to carry out their constitutional duty to protect the public's health.

Today I would like to share some new data from The Immunization Partnership's annual survey of hundreds of Texas parents.

The good news is that 98% of respondents agreed that vaccines keep children healthy by protecting them from disease. And 97% agreed that following the ACIP recommended vaccine schedule is best for their children.

This is good news and reiterates the public trust in the vaccine recommendations coming out of ACIP.

Now for the bad news.

We saw an alarming erosion in trust in the government regarding vaccinations among even strong vaccine supporters.

We saw a drop of over 17% in those who said they highly trusted the CDC as a source of information about vaccines.

We heard reservations for a COVID-19 vaccine, including fears the government was cutting corners and rushing through a vaccine before it could be tested to ensure it was safe and effective.

There were complaints about lack of transparency and concerns about political interference at the CDC and FDA.

This erosion of public trust will not be confined to the COVID-19 vaccine.

If people cannot trust the process for one vaccine, why should they trust the process for any of the life-saving vaccines recommended by ACIP?

This is my advice to the committee. You may be the last remaining group that can salvage this free-fall in public vaccine confidence.

ACIP must hold the line for science, for transparency, for the public. This committee must operate as if the whole world is watching, because they are.

Be transparent. Continue to hold frequent public meetings to showcase the transparency of your vaccine recommendation process.

Hold dear to your integrity and the integrity of your process. Yes, we are in a global pandemic and yes, we are in a national public health emergency. But do not take any shortcuts in your COVID-19 vaccine recommendation process. Do not rush, or appear to rush, your process.

Go slow and methodically with your independent review of the data.

Because perception is reality. Even the slightest public perception that ACIP is rushing or cutting corners in their well-regarded and well-established recommendation process will sink the last public trust we have in vaccines.

Thank you for your important work and the opportunity to share our comments.