

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2022

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dr. Joseph A. Ladapo
Surgeon General
Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis and Surgeon General Ladapo,

We write with serious concerns with how your Administration has handled the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for children under five, and to urge you to change course immediately so that our youngest children can get back to normal life with less risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.

As you know, on June 15, 2022, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) voted unanimously to give Emergency Use Authorization for Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines in children six months to five years of age. On June 19, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that all eligible children receive the safe and effective vaccine. Parents of young children have been eagerly awaiting this authorization, and your Administration's response to this recent advancement has caused unnecessary confusion among parents and providers and threatened the health of over one million kids across the state.

First, you intentionally missed the June 14, 2022 deadline for the state to preorder vaccines, senselessly delaying access to a life-saving vaccine for over one million children in this age group. In every other state, vaccines are already available for young kids in doctors' offices, children's hospitals, pharmacies, and health centers, yet Florida's children have had to wait thanks to your political stunt.

Second, you continue to spread disinformation about the safety and efficacy of vaccines, confusing parents and jeopardizing the health of their kids. COVID-19 vaccines have been rigorously tested for safety and efficacy, and both clinical trials and real-world data have proven that they reduce the risk of transmission, serious illness, hospitalization, and death—for all age groups.

Third, you continue to refuse to order vaccines for our local health departments. For many families who do not have a primary care provider, community-based health providers are the best, and sometimes only, available option to secure vaccinations. In our fight against COVID-19, we must make vaccines as accessible as possible for all families who want them. Withholding doses from public health departments will disproportionately hurt our most vulnerable families.

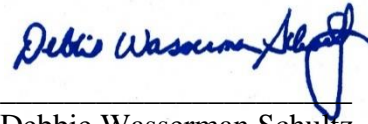
Over the course of the pandemic, more than 2 million children ages zero through four have tested positive for COVID-19, and nearly 500 have tragically died. And just the fear of illness or the ability to spread COVID-19 has led millions of parents to keep children from normal socialization.

You are the only governor in the United States who has refused to order these vaccines, creating obstacles for parents who want to have their child vaccinated against COVID-19. We urge you to reverse course immediately and allow all legal means of distribution.

Sincerely,



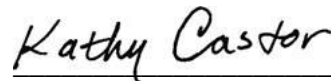
Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



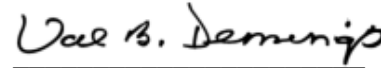
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