



For Immediate Release

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**The Massachusetts Public Health Alliance Statement Opposing the
Nomination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. to Lead the U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services**

The Massachusetts Public Health Alliance opposes the nomination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services and is urging senators to vote against his confirmation.

Mr. Kennedy's well-documented history of spreading disinformation regarding vaccinations, HIV and AIDS, water fluoridation, and transgender health care demonstrates that he is unqualified to lead the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In each of these cases, not only do Mr. Kennedy's assertions conflict with the recognized science, but they undermine successful public health interventions that have reduced illness, suffering, and deaths for decades.

On January 21st the Trump Administration instituted a sweeping gag order on all public communications from federal health agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institutes of Health. This dangerous new gag order is already impeding efforts to respond to emerging public health threats, like bird flu, and stalling critical medical research.

Information is power. The dissemination of trustworthy, accurate, science-backed information is itself a critical health intervention. The public must be able to trust that information from health agencies is not politically motivated or manipulated. Trustworthy information empowers individual people to make informed choices about their own health behaviors to protect themselves and their communities. Public health officials and practitioners use information from health agencies and research funded by federal grants to respond to public health threats, prevent widespread disease outbreaks, and design effective, lifesaving public health interventions.

The destabilization of U.S. health agencies coupled with the spread of pernicious disinformation will have a profound impact on the health of all Americans. In this context, the nomination of Mr. Kennedy is even more alarming. Mr. Kennedy has a history of ignoring scientific consensus and real-world health outcomes, instead drawing on discredited, pseudo-scientific assertions that better align with his own political narrative. Disinformation is dangerous from any public official; disinformation espoused by the leader of U.S. health agencies would be disastrous for the health and safety of all residents. For these reasons, MPHA urges the U.S. Senate to reject the nomination of Mr. Kennedy.

The Massachusetts Public Health Alliance (MPHA) is a nonprofit organization that promotes a healthy Massachusetts through advocacy, community organizing, and coalition building. We are leaders in the movement to create health equity by addressing the root causes of health and wellness. We promote policies that impact the major drivers of health outcomes, such as access to healthy food, safe affordable housing, and transportation. We also advocate for equitable public health services throughout the Commonwealth. To learn more, visit www.mapublichealth.org.

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