

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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August 11, 2021

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
NW Washington, DC 20500

Re: Executive measures to incentivize vaccine mandates

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge that you continue to wield the influence and authority of the federal government to incentivize vaccination mandates. The Freedom From Religion Foundation is a national nonprofit organization with more than 35,000 members whose purpose is to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism. Our membership, in fact, represents the sector of Americans — the nonreligious — who are most pro-science and most likely to be vaccinated.<sup>1</sup>

As cases of Covid-19 continue to rise in the United States and the delta variant sweeps through the country, the need for vaccine mandates has never been greater. The debate, unfortunately, has become acrimoniously partisan. Yet we note that the federal government still has the scope to use its authority in creative, specific ways to attain that goal of herd immunity so necessary to public and economic health.

We applaud the recent actions by your administration requiring vaccines for federal employees and military service members. Together, the Department of Defense and Department of Veteran's Affairs mandates will ensure that several million Americans are less likely to contract, spread and die from this all-too-deadly virus. These mandates, while not universal, are extremely effective tools at inching the nation toward full vaccination. Given that the VA has hospitals and the military has installations in nearly every state, these actions will help ensure that all areas of the country are receiving increased protection and reduce unnecessary illness and death among veterans and service members. But these steps are still not nearly enough.

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<sup>1</sup> "10 facts about Americans and Coronavirus vaccines," Pew Research Center, March 23, 2021  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/03/23/10-facts-about-americans-and-coronavirus-vaccines/>

While not everyone works directly for the federal government, the reach of federal funding and federal services is nearly universal. Below are a few recommendations on how the federal government may adroitly incentivize vaccination mandates:

**1. Require vaccinations for air travel.** Masks are already required for air travel. Vaccinations should be, too.

**2. Require school vaccination policies in order to receive federal funding.**

Withhold funding from schools, universities, and colleges that do not require vaccinations for all eligible. It is a hallmark of public education in the United States that all students must be vaccinated against certain communicable diseases. Proof of inoculation against Covid-19 should likewise be required for any eligible students and school staff. The federal government can force the hand of districts by withholding its checkbook.

**3. Require vaccinations or vaccination mandates in order to be eligible for federal awards, contracts, etc.** Other powers of the federal government that may be invoked in this cause include issuing visas and passports, awarding contracts and licenses. *The federal government should refuse to contract with businesses that do not require Covid-19 vaccinations.*

4. Selling decommissioned gear and materials to state and local governments should be contingent upon proof of vaccination or demonstration of organization-wide vaccination mandate policies. Specifically, the federal government can prohibit the distribution of decommissioned military equipment to police departments that don't mandate vaccination.

While the federal government always reserves certain regulatory powers, it appears that the strongest tool the federal government has regarding vaccination is its sheer size and ability to choose who it contracts with.

Urging, begging, bribing, and, sadly, reasoning with many unvaccinated Americans has had too little effect. When enough states, agencies, departments, contractors, services, and organizations receiving federal funding require vaccination, it will become increasingly difficult and inconvenient to remain unvaccinated.

The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution specifically entrusts the government with establishing justice, insuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense and promoting the general welfare. The single greatest threat facing our nation at this moment, which is endangering the general welfare and domestic tranquility, is the uncontained pandemic.

It's time for the federal government and governments at every level to mandate vaccinations wherever possible. Our nation and the world will be safer as a result.

Thank you for your continuing advocacy for science and reason during the pandemic.

Very truly,

Handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Annie Laurie Gaylor Dan Barker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Annie Laurie Gaylor & Dan Barker  
Co-presidents

ALG/DB:als