



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

December 7, 2021

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities, I write in strong opposition to S. J. Res. 29, a resolution to disapprove of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration's emergency temporary standard to protect workers from the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace. To date, COVID-19 has taken the lives of more than 785,000 individuals in the United States. This troubling legislation ignores the scientific evidence showing that workplaces are at risk for COVID-19 transmission.

OSHA has a legal responsibility to protect our nation's workers and has done so by issuing this important public health standard that protects them from the severe impacts of COVID-19 disease that can be acquired in the workplace. We know that vaccine mandates are effective public health tool and when employers require their workers to get vaccinated, vaccination rates increase to over 90%.¹⁻²

We also know that vaccines are effective in preventing COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths. The unvaccinated are 11 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than those who are vaccinated.³ A recent study shows that in the United States, vaccines are five times more effective in preventing serious illness and hospitalization than a previous COVID-19 infection.⁴ Any potential vaccine risk is considerably less common and less serious than the serious health consequences of contracting COVID-19.

¹ Hirsch L. After Mandate, 91% of Tyson Workers Are Vaccinated. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/business/tyson-foods-vaccination-mandate-rate.html> [Accessed 12 November 2021].

² Marcos C. United Airlines to Fire Workers Who Refused to Get a Vaccination. The New York Times. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/business/united-airlines-vaccine-mandate.html> [Accessed 12 November 2021].

³ Sullivan P. CDC data: Unvaccinated 11 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than fully vaccinated. The Hill. <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/576980-cdc-data-unvaccinated-11-times-more-likely-to-die-from-covid-19-than-fully> [Accessed 12 November 2021].

⁴ Bozio C, et al. Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 Among Adults Hospitalized with COVID-19–Like Illness with Infection-Induced or mRNA Vaccine-Induced SARS-CoV-2 Immunity — Nine States, January–September 2021. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), 70(44);1539-1544. https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7044e1.htm?s_cid=mm7044e1_w [Accessed 12 November 2021].

In November, APHA was among the 60 organizations representing the country's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other health professionals as well as some of the country's most prominent health care experts that issued a [joint statement in support of the OSHA standard](#). We urge you to listen to the scientific evidence and experts and oppose this and any other effort to overturn OSHA's standard to protect workers from the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "G".

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director