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California, Oregon, and Washington to launch new West Coast Health Alliance to uphold scientific integrity in public health as Trump destroys CDC's credibility

What you need to know: In response to recent federal actions that have undermined the independence of the CDC and raised concerns about the politicization of science, California, Oregon, and Washington are beginning the process to provide evidence-based **unified recommendations** to their residents regarding who should receive immunizations and to help ensure the public has access and credible information for confidence in vaccine safety and efficacy.

SACRAMENTO — Today, California Governor Gavin Newsom, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek, and Washington Governor Bob Ferguson announced they will launch a new West Coast Health Alliance to ensure residents remain protected by science, not politics. The alliance represents a unified regional response to the Trump Administration's destruction of the U.S. CDC's credibility and scientific integrity.

“President Trump’s mass firing of CDC doctors and scientists — and his blatant politicization of the agency — is a direct assault on the health and safety of the American people. The CDC has become a political tool that increasingly peddles ideology instead of science, ideology that will lead to severe health consequences. California, Oregon, and Washington will not allow the people of our states to be put at risk.”

Joint statement from Governors Newsom, Kotek, and Ferguson

“The dismantling of public health and dismissal of experienced and respected health leaders and advisors, along with the lack of using science, data, and evidence to improve our nation’s health are placing lives at risk,” **said Erica Pan, MD, MPH, FIDSA, FAAP, Director and State Public Health Officer, California Department of Public Health.** “California stands together with our public health and medical professional colleagues to uphold integrity and support our mission to protect the health of our communities.”

“Our communities deserve clear and transparent communication about vaccines — communication grounded in science, not ideology,” **said Sejal Hathi, MD, MBA, Director, Oregon Health Authority.** “Vaccines are among the most powerful tools in modern medicine; they have indisputably saved millions of lives. But when guidance about their use becomes inconsistent or politicized, it undermines public trust at precisely the moment we need it most. That is why Oregon is committed, alongside California and Washington, to leading with science and delivering evidence-based recommendations that protect health, save lives, and restore confidence in our public health system.”

“When federal agencies abandon evidence-based recommendations in favor of ideology, we cannot continue down that same path,” **said Dennis Worsham, Secretary of Health, Washington State Department of Health.** “Washington State will not compromise when it comes to our values: science drives our public health policy. Public health at its core is about prevention — preventing illness, preventing the spread of disease, and preventing early, avoidable deaths. We stand firmly with trusted medical professionals and organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and

leadership of pediatricians and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, as well as fellow West Coast health agencies — whose guidance remains rooted in rigorous research and clinical expertise. Our commitment is to the health and safety of our communities, protecting lives through prevention, and not yielding to unsubstantiated theories that dismiss decades of proven public health practice.”

Details about this new Alliance

Our three states share a commitment to ensuring that public health recommendations are guided by safety, efficacy, transparency, access, and trust. The Alliance will help safeguard scientific expertise by ensuring that public health policies in California, Oregon, and Washington are informed by trusted scientists, clinicians, and other public health leaders. Through this partnership, the three states will start coordinating health guidelines by aligning immunization recommendations informed by respected national medical organizations. This will allow residents to receive consistent, science-based recommendations they can rely on — regardless of shifting federal actions.

In the coming weeks, the Alliance will finalize shared principles to strengthen public confidence in vaccines and in public health. While each state will independently pursue strategies shaped by their unique laws, geographies, histories, and peoples, these shared principles will form the foundations of the Alliance. Importantly, the three states affirm and respect Tribal sovereignty, recognizing that Tribes maintain their sovereign authority over vaccine services.

CDC’s dismantling

Since its founding, the CDC has been central to protecting Americans from disease. But recent leadership changes, reduced transparency, and the sidelining of long-trusted advisory bodies have impaired the agency’s capacity to prepare the nation for respiratory virus season and other public health challenges. In a vacuum of clear, evidence-based vaccine guidance, manufacturers lack reliable information to plan production, health care providers struggle to provide consistent plans of care, and families face uncertainty about access and coverage.

In June, California, Oregon, and Washington condemned Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s removal of all 17 members of the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to science-driven decision-making. We will continue to provide clear, evidence-based guidance to people living in our states, look to scientific experts in trusted medical professional organizations for recommendations, and work with public health leaders across

the country to ensure all Americans are protected. The absence of consistent, science-based federal leadership poses a direct threat to our nation's health security. To protect the health of our communities, the West Coast Health Alliance will continue to ensure that our public health strategies are based on best available science.

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